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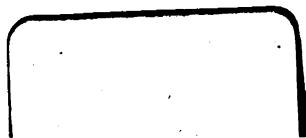
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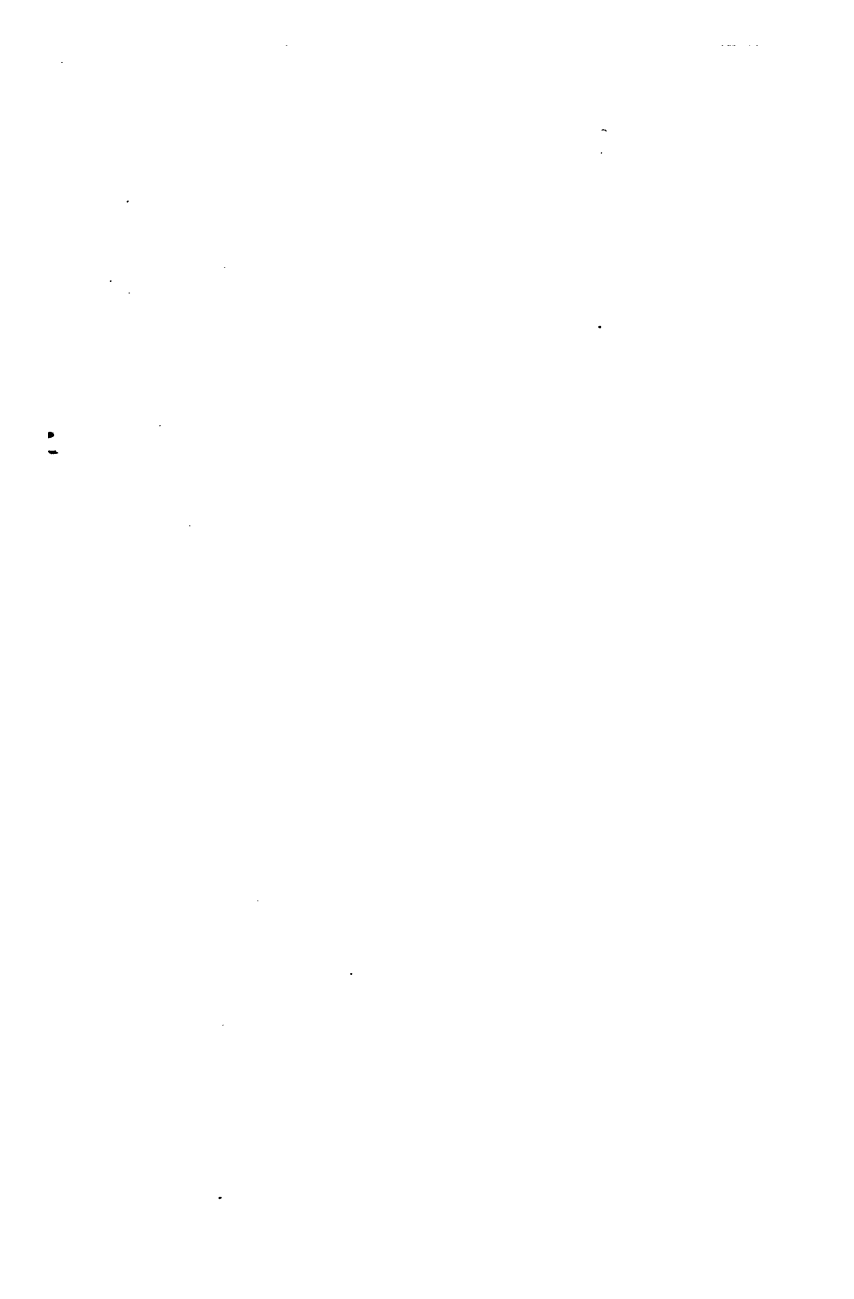
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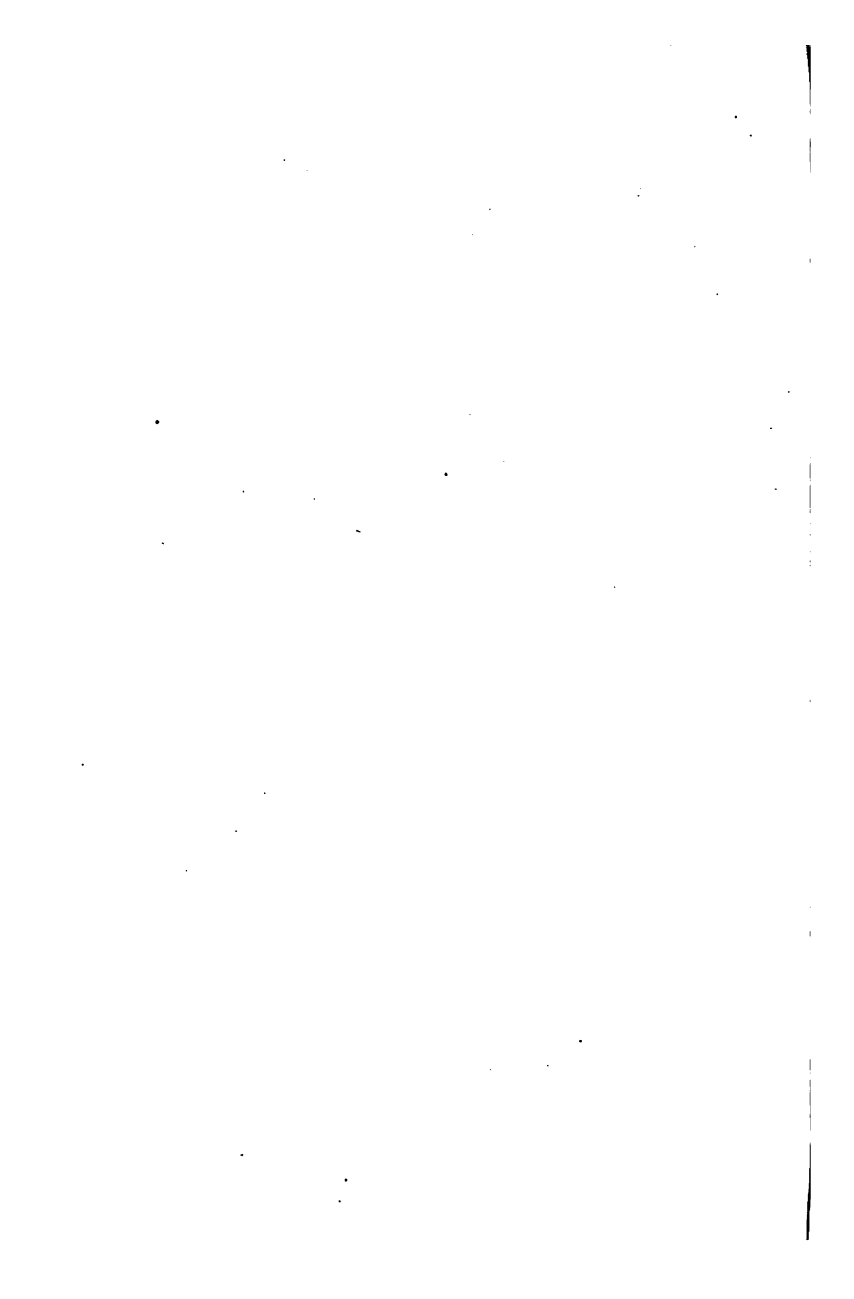




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STORIES OF THE SAINTS.

FIFTH SERIES.

By M. F. S.,

AUTHOR OF "LEGENDS OF THE SAINTS," "STORIES OF MARTYR PRIESTS,"
"STORIES OF HOLY LIVES," "STORY OF THE LIFE OF S. PAUL,"
"TOM'S CRUCIFIX, AND OTHER TALES," "FLUFFY," "THE
THREE WISHES," "MY GOLDEN DAYS," "CATHERINE
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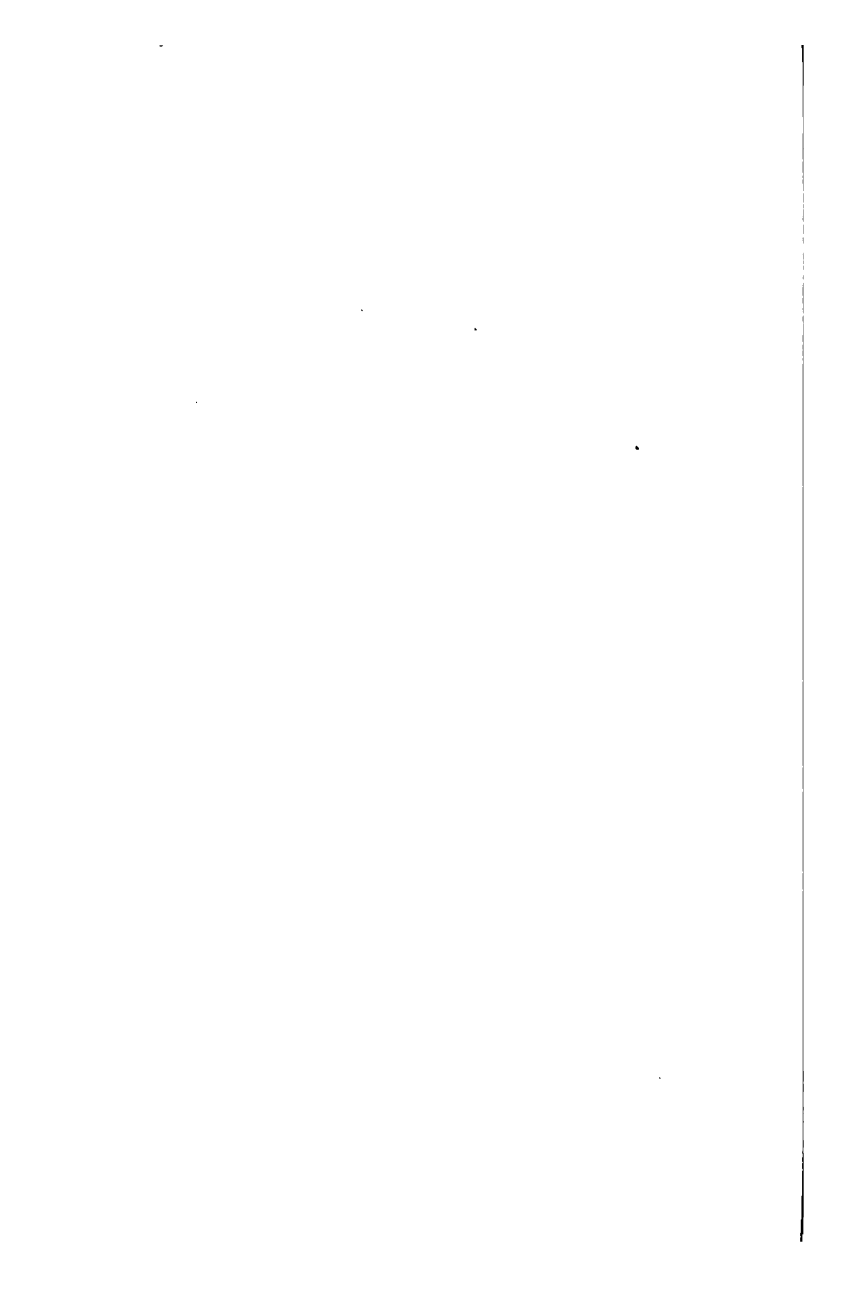
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Dedicated

TO

MARY IMMACULATE,

QUEEN OF ALL SAINTS, AND HELP OF CHRISTIANS.



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S. Ethelwold.

A.D. 984.

ETHELWOLD was born at Winchester during the reign of Edward the Elder, his father being of noble birth, and dwelling in that city.

From a very early age this boy seemed to care only for learning, and thus attracted the attention of the clever men who were high in favour with King Athelstan.

It appears that S. Ethelwold and S. Dunstan were ordained to the priesthood together; and when Dunstan was made Abbot of Glastonbury, Ethelwold took the habit of a monk there. But he did not long remain at Glaston-

bury, being most desirous of going to France; so he applied to King Edred for permission to travel; however this was not granted, and he received instead the gift of the Abbey of Abingdon, in Berkshire, to which he was accompanied by five other monks of Glastonbury.

They began to erect a new monastery there, as the Abbey had fallen into a ruinous state, and the King enriched it with a gift of land.

A story is preserved to us of one of the monks at Abingdon, a man of great simplicity, but very cheerful, and contented of heart. It was well that such was his character; for being wholly unassisted in the kitchen, he had hard work to manage all his duties; nevertheless, as he swept the kitchen and scoured the pots and pans, he sang the praises of God.

One day Ethelwold came into the trim, orderly kitchen, and found a great cauldron on the fire, in which bread and meat were stewing for the workmen engaged in the new buildings. "My brother," said he to Ælfstan,

“ thrust thy hand into the cauldron and fish me up a crust from the bottom, that I may see if the Lord approveth thee as I do.”

Ælfstan immediately obeyed, and when he brought up the required crust, his arm was quite uninjured; so the Abbot rejoiced, but bade him tell no one. In after times Ælfstan, once the cook, ruled Abingdon as Abbot, and subsequently was made Bishop of Winchester, in the year 1015. S. Ethelwold helped much with his own hands in work going on; and several times met with accidents which must have killed him but for the interposition of God.

About three years after the monastery was completed, Ethelwold was made Bishop of Winchester, being consecrated by S. Dunstan, at that time Archbishop of Canterbury.

Ethelwold found great laxity among the canons, and joined S. Dunstan in the general reform he was striving to effect, displacing those priests whose lives were not in accordance with the dignity of their office, and bringing his grave austere monks from Abing-

don to fill their stalls. This proceeding made the old monks very angry, and it is said that some of them attempted unsuccessfully to poison him. This work of reform was the great business of S. Ethelwold's life; and he had the satisfaction of establishing monks in most parts of England. For some years he was engaged in superintending the rebuilding of Winchester Cathedral, during which time he had the remains of S. Swithun transferred to a new tomb within the church. Like Dunstan, S. Ethelwold was a most skilful worker in brass and metals, and made some bells for the Abbey of Abingdon with his own hands. He suffered much pain and ill-health; but would not permit himself even the indulgence of meat, excepting when expressly commanded to do so by S. Dunstan.

The chief literary work of Ethelwold was the translation of S. Benedict's rule into Anglo-Saxon, in reward for which the manor of Southbourne was given him by King Edgar.

Ethelwold died upon the 1st August, 984,

and was buried in the Cathedral of Winchester. He was greatly beloved by reason of his charity to those who were in any distress. In one time of famine he had all the church vessels broken up, so that the gold and silver might be converted into money ; for, said he, "Precious metals are better employed in feeding the poor than in ministering to the pride of ecclesiastics."



S. Edith.

A.D. 984.

SEDITH, commonly called *of Wilton*, to distinguish her from S. Edith, of Polesworth, was the daughter of Edgar, King of Mercia, who afterwards reigned over all the English from the year 959 to the year 975.

The mother of Edith had been trained in the Abbey of Wilton, and there the little girl also was brought up, so that she knew nothing of the world and its many temptations, and with innocent heart received the veil while still very young.

In those early times the black or brown

conventual dress was not so general as now; and like some other nuns Edith wore bright gay clothing, for which the Bishop Ethelwold reproved her, deeming it a sign of too great conformity to worldly custom. "My reverend father," said she, "the mind may be as modest and God-fearing under fine clothes as under a habit of dark serge. The God I love, looks at the heart, and not at the dress."

It was a common thing then for kings to place whom they chose, in authority over convents and monasteries; thus Edith's royal father thought fit, when she was fifteen years old, to make her Abbess, and gave to her control of the religious houses at Winchester and Barking; but the young nun grieved so much at the thought of parting with her mother who had been made Abbess at Wilton, that she remained in her convent home some time longer.

The life of Edith was one of continual prayer, and she received many favours from Heaven. She caused a church to be erected

at Wilton, dedicated to S. Dionysius, and at its consecration the great S. Dunstan was present. He observed the singular devotion of S. Edith; and once, when she was making the sign of the Cross, he touched the thumb of her right hand, and said: "This thumb shall never decay." The prophecy was fulfilled; for many years after, when the body of the Saint had been laid in a grave in that church, and was disinterred for translation to another shrine, the right hand thumb was found perfectly incorrupt.

Peacefully and uneventfully S. Edith passed her days in the quiet cloister; but her life was brief, for in the twenty-third year of her age God took her to Himself.

Just as she was expiring, one of the nuns went to the door of the church, where she heard the sweetest singing, and looking in, saw that it was full of angels standing in ranks, one of which said to her: "Go back, we are awaiting the good maiden."

Edith of Wilton had been dead three years

when a lady at Winchester had a little girl born to her. She had long desired this blessing, and had asked the Saint to be the god-mother of the child, should God hear her prayer; but now Edith was in heaven, and another must fill the place she had undertaken.

So the infant was carried to the Cathedral, where S. Alphege, Bishop of Winchester, was to perform the ceremony and admit the little one among the number of God's children; but as he took the taper in his hand, he plainly saw S. Edith shining with the radiance of heaven, who held the infant on her arm, and extended her hand to receive the light. Directly after the baptism the Saint disappeared, but the mother knew that in heaven she would watch over and pray for the little one.

The body of S. Edith was for a long time exposed to the veneration of pilgrims to her shrine, where many miracles of healing were worked.



S. Guy.

A.D. 1012.

GUY, "the poor man of Anderlecht," was the son of very humble parents, but happily for him they were rich in Christian virtues, and though unable to give their child any learning, they made up for it by instructing him in the duties of his religion.

From his cradle, Guy gave signs of being one of those specially loved of God. He was always an obedient and humble child; so kind and gentle, too, with his companions that they loved him dearly. As soon as he was of an age to understand poverty, he rejoiced that

God had chosen it for him, especially as it was the means of constant humiliations, and, therefore, of constant conformity to the pattern of Christ, Our Lord. While treating those of higher station with respect, he never envied their good fortune; and if he heard the poor complaining, he would entreat them not to lose, by murmuring, the treasure God had bestowed on them.

Though so needy himself, Guy could always spare something from his own food for those who were still poorer than he; and daily he would visit the sick, trying to comfort them in soul and body.

One day, while he was praying in the Church of Our Lady, the curé noticed his devotion, and taking an opportunity of conversing with him, gave him the office of sacristan. His duty was to sweep the church, dress the altar, and fold up the vestments; also to ring the bell for Mass and Vespers, and other such duties, all of which were performed with perfect regularity. Nothing,

however small, seemed to Guy unimportant, for he looked on it as something to be done for God, and, therefore, with the greatest possible perfection. While his hands were busy he kept his heart united to God; and when his employment was done, his rest was prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Now that he had a small salary, the Saint found means to give more aid to others, living himself in the greatest poverty.

A merchant of Brussels offered him a partnership as a means of gaining money for his charities, and Guy accepted it; but God soon enlightened him to see that it was but a temptation, for the vessel and all it contained was lost, and he was left perfectly destitute.

He considered this a punishment for embarking in worldly business, and as a penance went on pilgrimage first to Rome, and then to Jerusalem. Having returned to Rome again, Guy was persuaded by the Dean of Anderlecht to be his guide to the Holy Land, whither he and several companions were about

to journey. Guy consented, and they started accordingly to visit the places made sacred by the footsteps of Our Lord ; but just as they were on the eve of returning to Europe, the Dean and his friends died from some pestilence ; and Guy having attended them during their illness, saw to their burial, and then came home to Anderlecht after an absence of seven years. But the fatigue he had undergone and the many hardships of his life now took effect upon his health, and after a complication of disorders, he died in September, 1012.

So many were the miracles worked by his intercession, that a church was raised near the spot where he had been buried, and there his remains were translated.

As time passed, the Chapel of S. Peter at Anderlecht became so famous by reason of the relics of S. Guy which were enshrined there, that a larger church, bearing the name of the Saint, was erected in its place.



S. Theobald.

A.D. 1066.

THIS Saint was the son of Count Arnoul, and was born at Provins, in Brie, in the year 1017, being called Theobald after the Archbishop of Vienna, who was his uncle.

In his youth he was very fond of spiritual reading, and preferred above all the "Lives of the Fathers in the Desert," feeling a most earnest desire to take them as his example in penance and self-denial. He often went to visit a holy hermit who dwelt on a little island in the Seine, and by his counsel began to accustom himself to fast-

ing, long prayer, and many corporal austerities.

When Rudolph, King of Burgundy, died in 1034, the crown was claimed by the Count of Chartres and Blois, but the Emperor Conrad had seized it, and war ensued. Count Arnoul now desired Theobald to command a body of troops, but he mildly and respectfully explained to his father that he had made a vow to quit the world with its duties and honours, and thus gained consent to enter upon a penitential life. Soon after, the Saint, with a young companion called Walter, started for the Abbey of S. Remigius, at Rheims; and after a short stay there, dismissed their servants, and changing their rich clothing for the garments of two beggars, they travelled barefoot to Germany, and reaching a forest in Suabia built for themselves two little cells, and there began the life of solitaries.

Knowing that manual labour was part of the rule of a hermit, and not understanding how to make mats or baskets, they went to the

neighbouring villages and took hire as field-labourers, or to serve the masons, or clean out the farmers' stables; and the wages thus earned served to buy them the coarse brown bread which was their only food.

While working with their hands, they raised their hearts to God in prayer, and after the toil of the day retired to their solitude, and kept vigil through the hours of darkness, or together sang the Divine praises.

But it was easy to see by their manners and their delicacy of appearance, that so rough a way of life was new to them, and their evident holiness began so to attract the eyes of men that they were forced to leave the forest.

After going on pilgrimage to Compostella, they returned to Germany, and there Theobald met with his father, Count Arnoul, who, however, did not recognise him, all tanned and ragged as he was. It cost the Saint some natural pain to meet, and remain unknown to one so dear; and determining to avoid any

similar trial in the future, he resolved to go to Rome. Again his friend went with him to visit the holy city, travelling barefoot and clad as pilgrims. They found themselves at length a retirement in a gloomy wood near Vicenza, where they erected two small cells, and resumed their exercises of prayer and penance until, two years later, Walter died.

S. Theobald receiving this as a warning to keep himself in preparation for death, began to increase his austerities in reparation for what he deemed the many sins of his life. His custom had been to eat only oat-bread, and roots, and herbs ; from this time he deprived himself of the bread, nor would he permit himself to rest on a board, but took his short sleep sitting on a rough wooden seat.

The Bishop of Vicenza now ordained Theobald priest, and many people came to him for spiritual counsel and help ; and thus his name was discovered, and his parents hearing of him set out joyfully to visit his cell. But when they looked on his changed face, when they

saw his emaciated frame, his tattered clothing, they burst into tears, and prostrated themselves at his feet, unable to speak to him. Afterwards, overcoming these natural feelings, they felt so moved by his example to relinquish the love of the world, that though the Count was obliged to return to Brie, the mother of Theobald took up her dwelling in a small cell not far removed from that of her holy son, and was by him instructed in the practice of Christian perfection.

It was very soon after this, that S. Theobald falling ill, knew that his end approached.

Great were his sufferings, but still greater were his patience and joy in enduring pain and weakness. Shortly before his death he sent to beg the Abbot of a religious house of the Order of Camaldoli, to come to him, as from his hands he had received the habit a year before, and to him he recommended his mother, and those who came to him for spiritual guidance. Then, receiving the holy Viaticum with faith and love, he passed from

this world upon the 30th of June, 1066, being about thirty-three years old.

The relics of S. Theobald were conveyed to Sens, and afterwards translated to Auxerre to a chapel called "S. Thibaud aux Bois."



S. Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester.

A.D. 1095.

THE parents of this Saint were persons of great piety, who, desiring to serve God in the most perfect state, mutually agreed to leave the society of each other, and spend their remaining years in religious houses.

Perhaps this pious example and the prayers of his mother were the cause of Wulstan also desiring to quit the world as soon as he was of an age to be received into the monastery at Worcester where his father was serving God.

There then, Wulstan was ordained deacon and priest, and later appointed Prior by Bishop

Aldred, who knew how great was his personal holiness, and thus how suited he was to such a position.

While exercising the office of Prior in this monastery we read that Wulstan, though very abstemious in his diet, had not altogether abstained from meat until one day, when the odour of what was being prepared for dinner caused him some distraction while offering the last Mass. Angry with himself, resolved to conquer nature, he made there before the altar a vow never again to touch meat, which vow he rigorously kept for the remainder of his life.

When Aldred, Bishop of Worcester, was elevated to the Archbishopric of York, Wulstan was elected his successor ; but it was only in obedience to the command of S. Edward the Confessor, and after many objections, that he allowed himself to be consecrated, which was done upon the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, in the year 1062.

Although as Bishop his duties were greatly

increased, Wulstan found time for all that devolved upon him, and daily sang the High Mass, regardless of the fatigue it caused him. As he rode on horseback in his journeys, he had his book open before him on the saddle, from which he recited his Office aloud.

But the day came when William of Normandy established himself in England, and gave the bishopric to his clergy. "Wulstan cannot speak French, he is a fool," said the imperious Conqueror, and he ordered Lanfranc, his Norman Bishop, to depose Wulstan on the charge of ignorance.

Being called before the authorities to answer to this charge, he rose and said: "We have not yet sung Sext. I will answer after we have chanted the Office."

Those who stood near did not agree to this, and represented that he would but draw upon himself the ridicule of the King and his courtiers. "The duty to God must first be done," replied Wulstan; and accordingly Sext was sung, and then the Council decided that Bishop

Wulstan must resign his pastoral staff and ring, being too ignorant to retain his see.

He refused to yield up his ring, for, said he, "I received it without coveting it, and I will bear it with me to my grave." But he would submit to lose the staff—the symbol of jurisdiction—and rising, he went to the tomb of S. Edward the Confessor, for it was in the Abbey of Westminster the Council had met. Standing before the stone, he cried : "O my master, thou knowest with what reluctance I received this burden, and how I sought to flee away from it. I confess that I am a fool ; but thou didst constrain me. But now we have a new King and new laws, and a new Archbishop ; and they accuse thee of error in commanding, and me, of presumption in obeying. Therefore, not to them who demand, but to thee who gavest ; not to them, walking in darkness and fallible, but to thee, who hast been led forth into the clear light of very truth, do I resign this staff ; to thee I surrender the care of those thou didst commend

to me ; and to thee I commit them in confidence, knowing well thy merits." Pausing a moment, Wulstan struck the staff into the sepulchral stone. "My Lord and King, accept this and surrender it to whom thou choosest ;" and then, laying aside his pontifical habit, he seated himself humbly amongst the monks.

Then all present saw that the staff stood fixed in the stone, and Lanfranc bade the priest, to whom the Bishopric of Worcester was promised, go and remove it.

He went, but was unable to wrench away the staff ; nor could the Archbishop or King do better than he.

Profoundly touched by this manifestation of God's Will, Lanfranc went straight to where Wulstan was sitting, and bowed low before him. "Verily God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble," he said : "thy simplicity, my brother, was scorned by us ; but thy righteousness has been brought to light. Take again then the charge which we unadvisedly deprived thee of ; but which we, by

our authority and the judgment of God, commit to thee again."

Wulstan hesitated, then walked once more to the tomb. "My Lord and King, show me now thy pleasure," he cried. "If thine old sentence stands, restore to me my staff; if not, yield it to another." Then he put forth his hand and removed the staff with ease, and having taken the oath of allegiance to William, remained the faithful servant of God and his King.



S. Anselm.

A.D. 1109.

IN the Cathedral of Canterbury there rest the remains of the great S. Anselm, in a chapel which bears his name ; but some relic of him has been spared to the city of his birth—the city of Aosta.

He was born about the year 1033, and though his father was a man of violent passions, God gave him a good and pious mother, whose stories of the Holy Saints and Martyrs laid the foundation of his early desire to become a religious.

But there came a time when this wish was overgrown by a love of pleasure and gaiety ;

for his mother was dead, and he suffered much by the loss of her gentle influence.

At length his father's harshness drove Anselm quite away from home; and after spending three years in France and Burgundy, he came to Normandy, staying awhile at Avranches, where Lanfranc of Pavia had once taught. His next step was to follow Lanfranc to the monastery of Bec, where he was Prior, and there he remained as a student until he chose the life of a monk.

Three years after receiving the habit, Anselm succeeded his friend Lanfranc as Prior, and fifteen years later he became Abbot of the monastery. He was admirably fitted for such a position, having a great influence over others, while his love and interest for the younger monks was untiring.

After his election, Anselm went over to England to visit Lanfranc at Canterbury; and his heart was full of charity towards the English, who returned his affection with reverent esteem. It is said that no one ever

had such power over William I. as Anselm ; and when Lanfranc died, there is little doubt that the Conqueror would have chosen Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury ; but by that time William Rufus had succeeded to the throne, and instead of naming any one to the vacant see, he declared his purpose of leaving it unfilled, and began to seize its possessions.

In 1092 S. Anselm was asked by Hugh, Earl of Chester, to come and reform the monastery of S. Werburga, which he had founded ; but at first the Abbot refused, though in the end he was prevailed upon.

Landing at Dover, he passed on to Canterbury, but quickly hurried away, for the people saluted him as the new Archbishop ; and then he sought an interview with William II., telling him plainly of the general dissatisfaction with his government.

We do not hear how the King received his reproof ; but when some months later Anselm desired to return to Bec, he was not permitted to do so, though William showed no inclina-

tion to appoint him Archbishop as the people desired. But in 1092 the King became ill, and believed himself dying; and Anselm was summoned to attend him; and his conscience was sorely troubled with the thought of what he had done regarding Canterbury, so that he at once named Anselm as Lanfranc's successor.

When the holy man heard that he was chosen, he seemed overcome with fear; and when the Bishops came to conduct him to the King's presence, that he might receive the pastoral staff, he was only taken there by force. Dragged to William's side, the staff was thrust into his hand, while the cry rose, "Long live the Bishop!" and then, still resisting, he was taken to the church, where the clergy chanted the "Te Deum."

At length Anselm was allowed to return to his lodging, but he was so faint and overcome that they brought him holy water and made him drink it; yet though he had thus had the office forced on him, he began to

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that for any man in his dominion to do so was as bad, as to try and deprive him of his crown. Anselm then requested that a Council should be called to decide the point; but unfortunately most of the Bishops were afraid of William, and the result was that they advised the Archbishop to submit to the will of his sovereign. The chronicle of Eadmer the monk tells us that "having said these words they were silent, and hung down their heads as if to receive what was coming upon them."

Anselm's reply showed how great and how noble was his nature. He stood up and with kindling eyes declared that he would appeal "to the chief Shepherd and Prince of all;" and then he added: "Know ye that in the things that are God's I will render obedience to the Vicar of S. Peter, and in those things which belong of right to the earthly dignity of my lord the King, I will render him both faithful counsel and service to the best of my understanding and power;" and he straightway went to William to repeat what he had said at the

realise that such must be the Will of God, and to that he must resign himself.

On the 4th December, 1093, Anselm was consecrated by the Archbishop of York; and though the King recovered, and seemed to do worse than he had ever done before his illness, he did not express any wish to revoke his decision concerning the See of Canterbury.

But William wanted money to help him against his brother Robert, and perhaps some regret was working in his mind that he had given up the revenues of his See to Anselm, for he began to entertain towards him a most bitter hatred, even saying: "His blessings and prayers I utterly abhor and refuse."

When S. Anselm asked leave to go to Rome to receive his pallium, it was at a time when a false Pope had risen up to dispute the succession; and William answered, "From which Pope will you receive it?" "From Pope Urban," was the Archbishop's reply; and then the King burst out into violent declarations he had not acknowledged Urban, and

that for any man in his dominion to do so was as bad, as to try and deprive him of his crown. Anselm then requested that a Council should be called to decide the point; but unfortunately most of the Bishops were afraid of William, and the result was that they advised the Archbishop to submit to the will of his sovereign. The chronicle of Eadmer the monk tells us that "having said these words they were silent, and hung down their heads as if to receive what was coming upon them."

Anselm's reply showed how great and how noble was his nature. He stood up and with kindling eyes declared that he would appeal "to the chief Shepherd and Prince of all;" and then he added: "Know ye that in the things that are God's I will render obedience to the Vicar of S. Peter, and in those things which belong of right to the earthly dignity of my lord the King, I will render him both faithful counsel and service to the best of my understanding and power;" and he straightway went to William to repeat what he had said at the

Council. The King was very angry, and declared that the Bishops must silence Anselm ; but this was not an easy matter to accomplish, for he had God and right upon his side, and the feeling of the people was with him.

At length the Bishops declared that as the King had withdrawn his confidence, so also should they resolve not to hold Anselm as their Archbishop ; but the laymen absolutely refused to desert him, and thus William was plunged in greater perplexity than before.

When Anselm again requested permission to go to Rome it was denied him ; but the Archbishop made his preparations, and a message was sent him that he was to take nothing away which belonged to the King. When Anselm bade the King farewell, he begged that he might give him God's blessing and his own. "I will not refuse thy blessing," William answered, and bowed his head, while Anselm made the sign of the Cross over him, and thus they parted.

Hastening to Canterbury, the Saint bade farewell to his monks, and taking a pilgrim's

staff in his hand, went to Dover, where he embarked; and William immediately seized the property of the See, and kept it until his death.

For a while Anselm remained in Rome; but afterwards he went to a more healthy place—a little mountainous village, which reminded him of his birthplace, and where he enjoyed great peace. When the news of William's death came to Anselm, a messenger followed, urging on the new King's behalf his immediate return to Canterbury; and in obedience to the summons, he started on his journey, landing at Dover on the 23rd September. There were many difficulties and dissensions to be endured and set right, for the good Archbishop was unwavering in his determination not to allow the Church benefices to be at the disposal of kings as rewards for services to the State; but at length all was quietly arranged, and Anselm's last days were undisturbed and peaceful ere he died among his monks at Canterbury, in the year 1109, being then seventy-six years of age.



S. Aelred.

A.D. 1166.

THIS Saint, who has been termed the S. Bernard of England, was born about the year 1109, on the lands of the ruined Abbey of Hexham, and one of his earliest recollections was the sound of the canons' voices as they daily chanted their Office.

But while still a child, Aelred was taken into the family of David, heir-apparent to the Scottish throne, as companion to his young son Henry; and in early youth we find him in the palace, caring more for his books and studies than for the tilts and tournaments of

the Scottish nobles. Dearly, he loved to read of the Christian martyrs of early history, shedding many tears for the sufferings which they endured so bravely for love of God; and the friendship of David and Jonathan, recorded in Holy Scripture, seemed to him infinitely more touching than any romance he had ever heard.

From a little child, Aelred's sole ambition seemed to be to find friends whom he could love, and who would love him in return; nor did anything cause him such pain as to receive coldness in place of the affection he longed for. However, Aelred was a general favourite at the Court of the King of Scotland, although the esteem in which he was held gained him some few enemies. One of these loaded him one day, even in the King's presence, with reproaches and insults, which Aelred's sensitive nature must have felt keenly, though he answered: "Thou art right, Sir Knight, and hast spoken well; what thou sayest is truth, and I see thou art a true friend of mine."

The rough soldier was shamed by the humility of this reply, and begged pardon, which Aelred promptly granted. "I am glad of thy penitence," he said; "and I love thee the more, because by thy hatred I have advanced in love to God."

After a time King David made his favourite, the High Steward of his household, yet Aelred was not happy; his friends bade him rouse himself from what they termed an unnatural gloom, yet in spite of every effort this dissatisfaction with his life returned, and would yield to no outward circumstances, nor inward resistance. Was this not because God was calling Aelred to His true work—because God was urging him to take up the Cross and relinquish earthly love and earthly joy?

So Aelred found his favourite books a weariness, and even the affection of friends did not fill the void in his heart; nay, he began to doubt whether this craving for love was right, whether he must not sacrifice it to the Will of the Almighty. At length Aelred felt

convinced that he must leave the court, the king, dear to him as a father, the young prince who had been his companion from earliest childhood, and one other—more dearly loved than all—whose name is not given us; yes, all must be given up, and in the quiet and seclusion of the cloister he would strive and pray to learn how to cling to God only, and find in Him all joy, all peace. So with saddened heart he left Dunfermline, and taking his way southwards, to where Yorkshire borders on Durham, joined a community of Cistercians, sent by S. Bernard from Clairvaux, to that spot called Blackmore, which they changed to the sweeter name of S. Mary of Rievaulx.

It was a desolate place, half buried in the wooded valley, yet when Aelred knocked at the gate of the then lowly abbey, he felt a peace he had never known before stealing into his heart, for he had taken the first step in the path which Heaven assigned to him.

For several days after Aelred's arrival at

the monastery, no one took any notice of him, and when he was introduced into the chapter, he was asked, "What wouldst thou?" and the austere rule was detailed to him.

For three days this took place, according to the custom of Cistercian monasteries, and then Aelred's worldly dress was exchanged for the habit of the novice, while the Abbot exclaimed: "The Lord put on thee the new man who, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Then the new-made monk felt that he had taken up the Cross he might never more lay down—the Cross of a lifelong struggle against earthly love and earthly temptation, to be rewarded by the crown in heaven.

It must have been hard to one accustomed to the ease and self-gratification of secular life, to dig up the rough ground, to fast and keep vigil, to give up his will to those whom he, perhaps, could well have instructed in many a branch of learning; yet Aelred persevered, and was greatly helped in the struggle

by watching one holy brother, of whom he writes : " The sight of his humility beat down my pride, while the contemplation of his calmness repressed my restless spirit."

After his year's novitiate was ended, he made his profession, and in due time was elected master of novices, for the eye of Abbot William had observed his talents and the many virtues which fitted him for this important post. A story reaches us of one who having been only a short time at Rievaulx, wearied of its strictness, and longed to return to the world. " I am going to run away," he said to his master ; but Aelred answered : " Brother, ruin not thyself ; yet well I know that if even thou wouldst do this, thou canst not."

However, the novice left the monastery, and plunging into the wood lost his way, but at sunset found himself back at the gates of the Abbey ; having believed that he was far enough away, he was enlightened to see in this accident only the hand of God. Accordingly he rang

the bell, and re-entering the monastery encountered Aelred, who with tears embraced him, saying: "Son, why hast thou done so unto me? I have wept for thee with many tears, and I trust in God that as I have asked of the Lord, and as I told thee, thou shalt not perish."

Aelred was soon bidden by the Abbot to employ himself in writing a book upon Christian love, which should be called the "Mirror of Charity," and the volume appeared just at a time when the world was filled with tumult and confusion, with wars and rumours of wars. Then did the monk in his peaceful cloister tell that "The love of God is His Holy Spirit within us; it is not feeling, it is not intellect, it is not joy, but it is this ineffable union with God, Who is not an idea, but a real living God." Further, he adds, "When thou hast tasted this spiritual sweetness be not straightway sunk down in sloth, for soon there will rise up by thy side a spiritual enemy, and he is not to be conquered by sloth, but by

prayers. Then after numberless contests, thou shalt be taken on high to receive thy reward, and thy soul will enter into the glory of God, where thou wilt be fed with the fruit of thy promises. The fire of heavenly love will burn up the yoke of earthly concupiscence, and thou shalt rest in the brightness of wisdom, in the sweetness of heavenly contemplation, and know of a truth that the yoke of the Lord is sweet, and His burden light."

A great sorrow came to Aelred while he wrote this book—even the death of the monk Simon, whose example had been his great incentive in first days of trial, and whom he loved with no ordinary affection.

Soon after this loss, news came from his father, whom Aelred had scarcely known, summoning him to his dying-bed. There, in his weakness, Eillan repented of unlawfully holding possession of the property of Hexham, and, relinquishing it into the prior's hands, spent his last few days in the Abbey of Durham, where they gave him the habit, and he

died truly repentant, having received the Sacraments of the Church. In the year 1143, William, Earl of Lincoln, begged the Abbot of Rievaulx to found a monastery on one of his estates, and Aelred was appointed head of the twelve monks who were to lay the foundation of the Abbey of Revesby. Axe in hand, they worked hard to clear the space allotted for their building, bearing, meanwhile, many discomforts, but after two years spent at Revesby, Aelred was called back to Rievaulx as Abbot, and thus became the head of the Cistercian Order in England.

In the Lent of the year 1153, the Saint was compelled by the business of his Order to take a journey to Scotland, and there for the last time he saw King David, who was then bowed down with sorrow under the loss of his son Henry, heir to the crown. When they parted, the King embraced Aelred with fondness, and even shed tears, for some presentiment that this was their last interview filled his mind; nor was it groundless, for at the close of

May news came to Rievaulx that David was dead.

When Aelred was called to a general chapter of the Cistercian Order, held at Citeaux, he bade his monks farewell, feeling that possibly he might never see them again, for he had suffered some years from some chronic disease. But he bade them pray for his return, because, as he says: "It is my wish to lay down among you the tabernacle of my flesh, and pour out my spirit in your hands, that you may close the eyes of your father, and my bones may be laid in the grave under your eyes."

The prayers of the monks were granted, and their Abbot not only returned from Citeaux, but lived six years longer in their midst, which years were passed in continual suffering.

After offering the Holy Sacrifice, he would lie for an hour or more on his bed, unable from extremity of pain either to speak or move; yet he never murmured.

Sometimes as the brethren passed the cell they could hear the voice of their holy Abbot, and angel voices answering him, while daily he seemed to grow more and more conformed to the likeness of his Master—more perfect in patience, humility, and charity.

At length, about the Feast of S. Laurence, 1166, Aelred died, and while deeply mourned by his brethren they could but rejoice that his pain was ended, and that there was one more Saint in heaven to pray for those still left to struggle with the temptations and trials of earth—a Saint who should bring glory upon the Cistercian Order, and be remembered through long ages as one of the holiest of God's servants which England has ever known.



S. Bernward.

A.D. 1022.

THERE stood upon the borders of the ancient diocese of Hildesheim, an abbey which in the year 856 had been founded by the Duke of Saxony for his daughter, who though but of the age of twelve, was made abbess under the supervision of Alsfrid, Bishop of Hildesheim.

Thus it came about that when any nuns took the religious habit, the ceremony was performed by the Bishops of Hildesheim, who continued to superintend the abbey of Gandersheim as in the lifetime of Alsfrid had been arranged.

But when S. Willigis was Archbishop of Mainz, and Bernward Bishop of Hildesheim, great difficulties and disputes arose concerning Gandersheim, the chief of which were caused by Sophia, daughter of Otho II., who resolved to take the veil there.

Bernward was a great lover of art, and for many reasons stood high in the favour of Otho III., who had come to the throne, and Willigis conceiving some jealousy towards him, resolved to re-open his claim to the Abbey of Gandersheim, which had already been argued with Bernward's predecessor.

It would seem that the convent had become very relaxed under the aged Abbess Gerburg, and the young nuns were left to follow their unrestrained will; Sophia—whom we have already mentioned—defied all authority, and went so far as to quit the community for more congenial society in the royal palace. When Bishop Bernward heard this, he remonstrated with her, and reminding her of her vows, commanded her return to the cloister;

but Sophia refused to listen or obey, and took a complaint to the Archbishop that the Bishop of Hildesheim had dared to rebuke a princess. "Neither I nor the Abbey of Gandersheim have anything to do with Bernward," she cried, "I owe him no allegiance;" and forthwith she returned to her convent, but only to try and excite the nuns to rebellion against the good Bishop.

Bernward knowing all this, still deemed it his duty to visit Gandersheim, taking no notice of the discourtesy with which he was treated.

Just then it happened that the convent church needed consecration, having been greatly enlarged and beautified; but as Gerburg was too old to arrange for the ceremony, Sophia took it into her own hands, and requested Archbishop Willigis to officiate, without consulting the Bishop upon the subject.

Unfortunately Willigis was glad of the opportunity of asserting his claim to Gandersheim, and he fixed the day of the Exalta-

tion of the Cross as one convenient to him for performing the ceremony, and then a message was sent by the Abbess inviting Bernward to be present. However, Willigis postponed it for a week, and as no one advised the Bishop of this alteration, he arrived at the appointed time, and was surprised to find nothing prepared. Entering the church, however, he began to say Mass, and people from the neighbourhood having seen his arrival flocked in. It was customary in those times for offerings of bread to be made upon days of peculiar solemnity, which were blessed and then distributed. When the deacons and sub-deacons went to the nuns for their offerings, they refused to make any, and when blessed bread was brought to them which the congregation had offered, they flung it contemptuously away.

Grieved and shocked by their unseemly conduct, Bernward burst into tears ; but concluding the Mass, he gave the blessing and departed.

On the Vigil of S. Matthew's day Willigis reached Gandersheim with a large attendance in readiness for the morrow's ceremony; but ere it took place, Eckhardt, Bishop of Schleswig, arrived, and expressing surprise that the Archbishop should think of consecrating a church which was not under his jurisdiction, requested him to reconsider his determination.

The matter was referred to a Synod; and Bernward started for Rome to appeal to the Emperor and the Pope against the injustice done him, because he felt that it was the cause of great scandal.

Long did the dissension last, and many were the humiliations of Bernward; but in the end Willigis saw his conduct in its true light and putting his staff into the hands of the Bishop said, "Beloved brother, I renounce all right over this church, and I give you this pastoral staff as a solemn testimony before Christ, the King, and our brethren, that neither I nor my successors can have any right here."

For the rest of his days Willigis proved his regret for the scandalous discord he had occasioned by a sincere friendship towards Bishop Bernward, in whose heart there had never rested the least animosity towards any who had used him ill. Several specimens of Bernward's genius in works of art still remain. In the Cathedral Square there stands a brazen pillar fourteen feet high, bearing twenty-eight representations from the Life and Passion of Christ in bas-relief, which was his production; for the skill with which he wrought in metal was wonderful. In the treasury of S. Michael there is a crucifix enriched with precious stones, which was his handiwork, and many other things; and still at Hildesheim there is preserved a copy of the Gospels, beautifully written and illuminated by Bishop Bernward, which bears an inscription in his own hand, with the date 1011.

This Saint was canonised by Pope Celestine III., in 1194, and his festival is observed on the 26th October.



S. Ubald, Bishop.

A.D. 1160.

AT Gubbio, long years ago, there might have been seen a company of sorrowful men, women, and children, pressing into the room where Ubald, their holy Bishop, lay dying ; and there kneeling to kiss his hand and obtain his last blessing.

Dearly had they loved him, and as they left his presence, to visit the church and pray for his soul during its agony, they could not refrain from weeping bitterly, because on earth they should see his face no more.

Gubbio was the birthplace of the holy Ubald, and when he attained the age of man-

hood he was appointed Prior of the Cathedral Chapter.

A great reform was needed, and few were ready to assist Ubald in making it; for most of the canons had grown luxurious, and some even gave public scandal by their way of life. Three of the number were found willing to live with Ubald in strict discipline, and in time he was enabled to reduce disorder and establish a different state of things. In the year 1128 the Bishop of Gubbio died, and Ubald was unanimously elected to fill his vacant place, being consecrated by Honorius II., then Pope. Great was his influence over his flock; a word from him would settle many a dispute, and change enemies into friends. On one occasion we hear of so violent a feud between two parties, that swords were drawn on either side. The Bishop, hearing of the affray, hurried to the market-place to call for peace; but the disturbance was such that he could make himself neither seen nor heard.

Suddenly Ubald staggered, and fell to the ground, and then the combatants saw him, and rushed to the spot where he lay, that they might raise him from the ground. They thought he had been struck by one of the stones which the angry people were hurling at each other; but the holy Ubald rising looked round on them, and said: "It was not a stone which struck me, my children. My heart was pierced with grief at sight of this bitter animosity. Separate, and keep peace;" and in a few moments order had taken the place of confusion.

During the time Ubald was Bishop, the walls of the town had to undergo some repair, and in doing this the masons had much injured a vineyard belonging to the Bishop. When he remonstrated with the mason, the man flew into a passion, and with an oath pushed him away so violently that Ubald, being somewhat lame, fell into the liquid mortar, which had been prepared. Rising, he went back to his palace without a word



S. Hildegarde.

A.D. 1170.

SO remarkable is the life and work of S. Hildegarde, so strange is it that one who had chosen the religious state should be moved by the Holy Ghost to utter warnings and even reprimands to those in positions of great power, that we shall fail to see in all this God's special design in her regard unless we consider the times in which she lived. The condition of the Church in Germany was then most miserable; men had been made Bishops who were unfit to exercise spiritual authority, who possessed worldly rank rather than piety of heart, and

who were constantly warring with their enemies and leading out troops to fight against them. Of such as these Hildegarde wrote: "They ought to be the pillars of the Church, learned in Scripture, filled with the Spirit; but instead, they ruin by their avarice and ambition the Church which they should adorn."

The parents of this remarkable woman were the Count Hildebert and his holy wife Mechtilde, who seeing in her child signs of future holiness and great power of mind, placed her at eight years old in a convent under the care of the Abbess Jutta or Judith, who watched over Hildegarde with the tenderness and care of a mother, and in course of time clothed her in the habit of religion. As early as six years of age the Saint had been permitted to see wondrous visions, though it was not until she was older that she understood how to describe what passed within her soul. Then she wrote: "These things I see not with my bodily eyes, nor through my understanding or thoughts,

but through my spirit, though with open eyes, so that they never stir in me an emotion, but I see these sights working by day and night alike."

Strange illnesses came to Hildegarde which had spiritual rather than physical causes, and once she had so much the appearance of a dead person that the day of her burial was fixed, but before it came she had revived.

When the Saint was about thirty-eight years of age, she was chosen Abbess in place of Jutta, who was removed by death in the year 1136; and then so many women came to put themselves under the direction of one already greatly esteemed for her sanctity, that a new convent had to be built for their reception at Rupertsberg, near Bingen.

Here Hildegarde yielded to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and began to write down things which had been divinely revealed to her, and directly she thus overcame her reluctance, strength of body returned and her sufferings passed away. She had been timid

and fearful to make known the prophecies and warnings with which her soul had been filled from above, now she courageously proclaimed what the Most High had declared to her. So as Hildegarde wrote strange things to princes and prelates—such things as they could not but listen to—she was much talked of; and when her fame reached Pope Eugenius III., he sent Adelbert, Bishop of Verdun, to talk with her, and judge by what spirit she was led.

A council was called to pass judgment upon some of the books she had written, and they were found to be filled with remarkable words respecting events in the future history of the Church, visions which had been granted her, and also with many treatises on the Divine and human natures. The Fathers who had assembled by the Pope's command to report on the life and revelations of Hildegarde were convinced of her power of mind, and they decided that her utterances could only come from one prepared by God for a great and unusual work in the world. After a careful examination which

lasted three months, the Pope wrote to the Saint with his own hand, bidding her prize carefully the great graces God had lavished upon her, but also to exercise prudence in making known what the Holy Spirit suggested to her soul.

Thus upheld by the approbation of the Sovereign Pontiff, Hildegarde continued her work as a prophetess to the Church.

The great S. Bernard, when journeying through Germany, went to see the famous Abbess of Rupertsberg, and having read some of her writings said: "These revelations are not the work of a human being, neither can any creature understand them unless the love and grace of God in his soul has renewed in him the Divine likeness." At this one of his companions remarked that there were, however, many men both learned and pious, who regarded these very revelations as so many delusions; whereupon S. Bernard said that such persons but proved how little they understood the wonderful union which existed between a

fervent loving soul and its Creator. From this time a deep and lasting friendship existed between these two Saints, and when S. Bernard was preaching his crusade in the Rhineland Hildegarde undertook to pray for his success, and ascending the Feldberg remained there so long in supplication that she fainted from exhaustion.

When the people of Mainz were planning a revolt against their Archbishop who had long treated them with excessive tyranny, S. Hildegarde wrote to him thus: "The living Light saith to thee, 'Why art thou not strong in fear?' Thou hast a sort of zeal, trampling down all that opposes thee. But I warn thee, cleanse the iniquity from the eye of thy soul, cut off the injustice wherewith thou afflictest thy people. Turn to the Lord, for thy time is at hand."

But the Archbishop paid no heed to this or any other warning, and said: "The people of Mainz are dogs that bark but bite not."

When Hildegarde was told of these words she

sent to him saying that these "dogs" would tear him in pieces; nor was her prophecy unfulfilled, for soon afterwards the Archbishop was cut down by an axe with which a butcher had armed himself, and his body being flung into a ditch was there pelted with eggs by the rough women of the market, in token of their hatred and scorn.

When such was the state of feeling between Bishops and their people, we do not wonder that God might choose a woman like Hildegarde to declare in His Name that the pride and irreligion of these German prelates was a curse to the Church of Christ, or that she should write, "The priest is not to be a soldier, nor the soldier a priest."

A strange controversy arose between her and the choir-bishop of Mainz. A certain young man had died after being excommunicated by one of the bishops, but he had been buried in the cemetery belonging to the convent of Rupertsberg. Hildegarde received a peremptory order to have his remains dis-

interred, as it was not fitting that he should lie in consecrated ground.

The holy Abbess refused to do this thing, because in a vision she had been told by God not to permit it; besides the young man had made his confession and received the last Sacraments of the Church, before he died. As she remained firm in this refusal, her convent was laid under an interdict so that Divine Office could not be sung there, neither was she herself permitted to receive Holy Communion.

For a month this went on, and then Hildegarde wrote to say that a heavenly voice had spoken to her commanding that singing should be heard in the chapel, and therefore she dare not submit much longer to an unjust sentence. However she could not obtain any redress until the Archbishop of Cologne interfered, and then the interdict was removed.

In her many journeys, Hildegarde visited Metz and Franconia, and also Paris and other cities of France. Upon the 17th September

1179, this Saint died, and was interred in her own convent church ; but some centuries later the building was destroyed, and then the remains of Hildegarde were removed to Eibingen, and there honourably enshrined.



S. Peter Damian.

A.D. 1072.

THERE once dwelt in Ravenna a family who, though well-born, were poor; and youngest of the many children was Peter, whose birth took place about the year 988. While still very young he had the misfortune to lose both parents, and was left in the hands of a married brother, in whose home he was treated scarcely better than a little slave.

As he grew older, Peter was employed as a swine-herd, and thus earned a trifle. One day, instead of spending this little money on himself and his wants, he gave it to a priest, asking prayers for the soul of his father.

But by-and-by another brother, who was an arch-priest at Ravenna, and afterwards a monk, took pity on Peter, and sent him to school.

Having good abilities, the boy made rapid progress, and was soon sufficiently instructed to help in teaching others.

During that part of his life he began to wear a hair-shirt under his ordinary clothing, and practised fasting and other austerities; and when he felt himself strongly tempted by the Evil One he would plunge into the river, even if it were the middle of the night. His heart was most charitably disposed towards the poor, so that he gave away nearly all that he had, even the food which was prepared for his own meal. But at length Peter began to feel an irrepressible longing to leave the world for the seclusion of the cloister; and whilst his mind was busy with such thoughts, two Benedictine monks happened to pass through the town, and some conversation with them resulted in a determination to belong to their institute if it were possible.

It was a hermitage which had been founded by Blessed Ludolf, and was in high repute for the sanctity of those who dwelt there. The monks lived in separate cells, and kept a very rigorous rule, eating upon four days in the week only bread and water, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays pulse and herbs, which each prepared for himself. The severe life brought on S. Peter an attack of nervous wakefulness, which nearly exhausted his strength; but afterwards he learned to use more discretion in his practice of penance.

His Superior began to command him to make frequent exhortations to the religious, and so great was his repute that Guy, Abbot of Pomposia, begged for him to come and instruct his monastery, in which there were some two hundred monks. For two years S. Peter Damian remained there, and was then sent to perform the same duty at another large Abbey, until he was again recalled to the hermitage. Upon the death of his Abbot in 1041, Peter had the government of the desert depending

on him ; and he founded five new hermitages, in which his great aim was to cherish the spirit of humility, necessary to the disciples of Christ.

When Nicholas II. reigned as Pope, he chose S. Peter Damian as his legate, when complaints came of simony in the church of Milan. Often the Saint had begged in vain for permission to retire to his solitude ; and when Alexander II. succeeded Nicholas, he with much reluctance granted this request, although he reserved to himself the power of employing S. Peter in any matters of ecclesiastical difficulty.

In his retirement the holy man occupied himself in writing upon the obligations of those who had embraced the religious state ; and especially did he censure the custom of monks rambling from monastery to monastery.

If Peter Damian recommended austerity to others, he certainly practised it in his own life, for he shut himself up in his cell, used fre-

quent disciplines, wore iron girdles, and eat only the coarsest kind of food.

During hours devoted by his rule to manual labour, he was accustomed to make wooden spoons and other things likely to be useful among the brethren.

The last time he left his favourite solitude was when sent by Pope Alexander II. upon the occasion of the excommunication of the Archbishop of Ravenna, to arrange the affairs of the church; on arriving at the city he found the unhappy prelate had just expired. The journey had greatly exhausted him, for he was now old; but he would not suspend his accustomed habits of mortification. Returning towards Rome a fever attacked him while resting at the monastery of Our Lady, at Faenza, and his enfeebled frame could not rally from it. On the eighth day of his sickness, while the monks were reciting Matins by his bedside, he peacefully passed away, having reached the age of eighty-three years. S. Peter Damian is the special patron of Faenza

and Font-Avellano, and in both places his festival is observed upon the 23rd of February.

A hymn written by this Saint has been thus translated :

“ Christ, Thy soldier’s palm of honour,
To Thy city, bright and free,
Lead me, when my warfare’s girdle
I shall cast away from me ;
A partaker in Thy bounty,
With Thy Blessed Ones to be.

“ Grant me vigour, while I labour
In the ceaseless battle pressed,
That Thou may’st, the conflict over,
Give me everlasting rest ;
And I may at length inherit
Then my portion ever blest.”



S. Peter, Martyr.

A.D. 1252.

S PETER the Martyr was born in the year 1205, at Verona ; but his parents were infected with heresy, which at that time had crept into the northern part of Italy.

However the father of Peter sent him early to a Catholic teacher, believing that it would be an easy matter afterwards to efface any religious impressions, and anxious only that he should make progress in his studies. One of the first lessons taught him was the Apostles' Creed, which the heretic Manicheus held in the greatest abhorrence. Peter's uncle hearing him

recite it, tried to persuade him it was false ; but the child's faith could not be shaken, and he so resolutely maintained that God was the Creator of all things visible, that his uncle was troubled and tried to communicate his fears to Peter's father. He was then sent to Bologna for education, a city full of impurity and evil at that time ; but amidst many dangers and temptations God preserved His young servant in innocence. To strengthen him the more against all evil, Peter at fifteen years entreated S. Dominic to give him the religious habit, and he began to practise his rule with great fidelity and fervour.

During the term of his novitiate his piety and recollection were observed by all his brethren, who marvelled at such great humility and mortification of every inclination. Each hour of the day saw Peter busy, either in serving the sick, or in prayer, or spiritual reading, or perhaps in some menial occupation, such as sweeping and cleaning the rooms ; but whatever he was doing, it was done with the

greatest possible perfection as in the sight of God.

He felt specially attracted to pray for the conversion of sinners; and thus, when he was ordained priest, he devoted himself to preaching, and was the means of converting many heretics. But great trials frequently befall those whom God has chosen for His own special service, and Peter was accused by his brethren of admitting strangers to his cell, contrary to the rule; and for this he was punished by being sent to a remote convent, and prohibited from preaching. After some months his innocence was completely proved, and he was recalled to his former work; but during that time of humiliation S. Peter rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer in some slight degree like Him Who—though infinitely holy—was accused of all kind of sin.

The Saint now preached with greater earnestness and more marked success than before, so that great crowds came to hear him, some seeking his blessing, others begging him to

lay his hands on their sick, and God gave him power to work many wonderful miracles of healing. Being made Superior of several houses of his Order, and constituted Inquisitor-General of the Faith by the Pope, the Manicheans became more than ever incensed against him, and after a time conspired to bring about his death. Their plan was to hire two assassins to murder him, while returning from Como to Milan; and one of these men fell upon the Saint, cutting him on the head with an axe, and then stabbed his companion. Seeing Peter rise on his knees and praying, "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my soul," the murderer wounded him in the side, and thus he expired, being forty-six years old.

His body was conveyed to the church of the Dominicans at Milan, where it is still preserved.

The man who had committed the murder fled to the city of Forli, and filled with horror at his sin, renounced the Manichean heresy, and became a Dominican lay-brother; other

heretics also were moved to sorrow, and hearing of the wonderful miracles wrought at the Martyr's shrine, came begging to be admitted into the Church of Christ. S. Peter, Martyr, was canonised by Pope Innocent IV., and a festival in his honour appointed to be kept upon the 29th day of April.



S. Peter Celestine.

A.D. 1296.

THIS Saint was born about the year 1221 in Apulia, and as he gave early signs of piety beyond that which is ordinarily seen in the children of virtuous parents, his mother gave him an education which should fit him for the priestly office if God called him to that dignity.

At twenty years of age we find Peter retiring to dwell in a lonely mountain, having made for himself a narrow little cell; and here for three years he dwelt, overcoming many violent temptations by Divine grace, and practising the great austerities which that

grace suggested to him. He was then ordained priest, but in 1246 sought another solitary cave for a dwelling, and there remained five years. If God gave him moments of wonderful union with Himself, if he was permitted to taste a spiritual sweetness we can scarce imagine, the Saint had also to pass through interior trials so great that he was well-nigh driven to despair and durst not say his Mass. It was thus he sought the Pope to receive counsel from him, but on the road to Rome was comforted by the vision of a holy Abbot who bade him return to his cell and offer the Holy Sacrifice daily, despising his fears and scruples as mere stratagems of the devil. In 1253, with two companions, Peter removed to Mount Magella where with the boughs of trees they made themselves a small enclosure; others wished to join them, and after some hesitation the Saint received those who appeared most fervent in the service of God.

During this part of his life, S. Peter never eat flesh, and fasted on all days but Sundays ;

while on Fridays he took nothing but a few cabbage leaves or bread and water. Upon his body he wore a rough hair-shirt and an iron chain, and his bed was a board with a stone or log of wood for a pillow.

At last so many had put themselves under his direction that it became necessary to assemble them in a monastery, and in 1274 Pope Gregory X. approved this religious Order under the primitive rule of S. Benedict, and the Saint lived to see six and thirty monasteries wherein six hundred monks and nuns were striving to serve God in the most perfect way.

When Nicholas IV. died, S. Peter was chosen as his successor to the See of Rome, and upon his consecration he took the name of Celestine V., but though raised to so exalted a station he still maintained his old austerity of life, and made in his palace a cell of boards where he might dwell in poverty while in the midst of riches. But S. Peter Celestine felt himself of insufficient experience for his new

position ; and finding that it was in the power of the Pope to abdicate, he held a consistory, and having read the solemn act of abdication, laid aside his pontifical robes, and assumed his old religious habit, cast himself at the feet of the assembly, begging pardon for his many faults and entreating the Cardinals to repair them by making choice of a more worthy successor of S. Peter. Thus after reigning four months the Saint left the throne with a joy he had not felt on his accession to it, and went privately to his monastery of the Holy Ghost at Morroni. But murmurs arose, and some contended that a Pope could not resign his dignity, and when the King of Naples was entreated to send S. Celestine to Rome, he heard of it and endeavoured to escape. But contrary winds drove back the vessel in which he had secured a passage, and he was taken to the palace of Pope Boniface and afterwards placed in the citadel of Fumone under a guard of soldiers. Here he suffered many hardships, but was perfectly content, saying, " I desired

nothing in the world but a cell, and a cell they have given me."

One Whitsunday in 1296, having heard Mass, he told his guard that within the week he should die; and immediately symptoms of fever appeared, and he was so ill that he received Extreme Unction. On the following Saturday he was reciting the last psalm of Lauds, when as he said the words "Let every spirit praise the Lord," his eyes closed, and calmly he passed from the world. He was then seventy-five years old, and had been confined ten months in his prison. His remains were interred at Ferentino but afterwards translated to the church of the Celestines in the city of Aquila. Many miracles were worked at his tomb, and in the year 1313 he was canonised by Clement V.



S. Odilo, Archbishop, Cluny.

A.D. 1049.

THERE dwelt in former days in Auvergne a little boy who could neither walk nor move himself unaided.

One day when his parents were going to reside in another place, a nurse was employed to carry him in her arms, and she being obliged to go into a house to procure some necessary, seated the child for a few moments in the doorway of a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Finding himself alone, some impulse—which we may be assured was from above—prompted him to try to enter. With much difficulty, and crawling on hands

and knees, he accomplished his desire, even reaching the altar, and clinging to its frontal, he attempted to rise. By a miracle he stood on his feet, and even ran about near the altar, and when the nurse discovered him, she at once recognised the power of God, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother, and carrying the boy to his parents she told them he was cured.

We shall not marvel that this incident of his early childhood should be the beginning of serious thought, and a fervent love for his Heavenly Father; and when he was of a suitable age he laid open his heart and all its desires to S. Majolus, who passed through Auvergne at that time, and encouraged him to seek admittance in the monastery of Cluny, where he himself was Abbot.

For four years Odilo dwelt among the brethren, attending to the commonest duties, trimming the lamps, and sweeping the floors; then Majolus in dying named him as his successor, and committed the monastery to his keeping.

Odilo shrank from such a position, for which he considered that his youth disqualified him; but the monks seconded the desire of their late Abbot by giving him the office by vote, and thus he could not continue in his refusal of it.

We hear that even in sleep his lips would murmur the beautiful verses of the Psalms which his heart loved, so his brethren used to say that of him it might truly be spoken, "*Ego dormio et cor meum vigilat.*"

He was distinguished by a very great charity, but though giving largely he was never wasteful. Once during a time of famine he came upon the unclothed bodies of two poor youths who had died of hunger, and shedding many tears he dismounted and drew off one of his garments, and having wrapped the bodies in it he buried them carefully. During this same famine the Saint sold the costly vessels, and the gold and silver ornaments of the church, that he might feed the starving people, and

he also parted with a crown of gold which had been presented to the abbey.

It was in his great compassion for the souls of the departed, that S. Odilo instituted the commemoration of All Souls in the Cluniac Order, which was afterwards adopted by the whole Church. Many anecdotes of the wonders he wrought have been handed down to us, one of which runs as follows. A very beautiful and costly glass had been sent to Odilo by the Emperor Henry, and receiving it with much humility at the hands of two prelates, he told them to return for it in a little while.

The monks in admiration passed the beautiful goblet from hand to hand, but, alas ! it slipped from the hold of one of them and was broken. When Odilo heard of this, he said : “ My brethren, you have not done well, for by your negligence those who have charge of these things may lose the Emperor’s favour. Let us all go to the church and ask God’s mercy in this matter.”

Accordingly they had recourse to prayer,

which being ended, the Saint commanded that the broken goblet should be brought to him. Taking it in his hand he examined it closely, but could discover no breakage, nor even a crack or chip. "You must be blind to say this glass is broken," he cried to the astonished brethren, who for some moments were afraid even to speak.

Upon the return of the prelates according to his bidding, Odilo gave it to them, saying they might take it back to the Emperor, bidding him guard it as a treasure.

This Saint rebuilt several of the monasteries of his Order, and adorned the churches in the most costly manner. Of Cluny he used to say, that he "found it of wood and left it of marble."

When he felt the close of life drawing near, he visited the different communities over whom he had authority, so that he might leave them in good order, and likewise bestow on them his blessing. During this circuit he reached Souvigny, where he preached on the vigil of

the Nativity, though he was even then ill ; nor could he celebrate the Festival as he had intended, but kept it in the small Chapel of the Virgin with a few of the brethren. During the Octave he had to be carried to the church, but he could not be deterred from assisting at the different offices.

Before the Feast of the Circumcision, he was laid before the altar of Mary while Vespers was sung, but towards night he grew weaker, and fainter, and sackcloth and ashes being laid under him, he exclaimed : " God be thanked." He then directed that all the brethren should gather round him, and with lips moving in prayer, and eyes fixed on the Cross, he passed to his rest. The body of S. Odilo was laid in the Church of Souvigny, near that of S. Majolus. In art he is often represented saying Mass with purgatory open beside the altar, in allusion to his having instituted the commemoration of All Souls, as we have already related.



S. Bruno.

A.D. 1101.

THIS Saint, the great founder of the Carthusian Order, was born at Cologne, about the year 1040, being descended from an ancient family well esteemed for piety and virtue.

His parents placed him, while still a little child, under the care of the clergy of S. Cunibert's Church, where he gave proofs of singular piety, and also of much ability of mind. From Cologne he passed to Rheims, to a college in much repute; and here, in 1055, he was made director of studies, and also of all the chief schools in the diocese. It appears

that S. Bruno held a position of much influence at Rheims, under the Archbishop Ger-vasus.

But after a while he became desirous to embrace a life of retirement, for the world seemed almost hateful to him there ; just when the archbishopric was about to be conferred on him, he left Rheims with several companions whose desires were like his own, and repaired to Saisse-Fontaine, where he remained for some time. Seeking counsel as to what God asked of him in the future, from S. Robert, Abbot of Molesme, Bruno was advised to visit the Bishop of Grenoble, who was better fitted to direct him than any other person ; and thus it was in 1084, he, with six companions, came to beseech the Bishop of Grenoble to find them some solitude wherein they might serve God more perfectly than in the society of men. In a vision of the previous night, the holy Bishop had seen a church being erected in a deserted spot called Chartreuse, and seven stars were rising from the

ground, and forming a circle which preceded him and showed him the way to the church. Feeling no doubt that thus the coming of these seven men had been foretold to him, Hugh welcomed them warmly, and advised them to make their retreat in the desert of Chartreuse; but he warned them that it was a dreary and dismal place, with high rocks shutting it in, and covered during the greater part of the year with snow.

These servants of God were in nowise discouraged by hearing of the difficulties or sufferings they might expect; and arriving in the wilderness, they at once built an oratory, and seven small cells a little removed from one another.

Thus was originated the Order of Carthusians, which took its name from the desert wherein S. Bruno dwelt with the few companions of his solitude, yet apart from each other, excepting upon Sundays; then, when separating, every one took a loaf and the quantity of pulse which would be necessary to him for

the week, so that there might be no need of communication again until the appointed day. Next to their skin they wore coarse hair-shirts, and they kept an almost perpetual fast, nor even in illness could they touch meat. Labour followed upon prayer, and as a means of gain they made copies of spiritual books, so that thus they might not become burdensome to others. S. Bruno's example soon inspired many to desire the same life of fasting, solitude, and silence, so that men of all ages and rank came to entreat to be admitted among his disciples.

After governing for six years, Pope Urban II., once a scholar of S. Bruno, at Rheims, sent an order for him to come to Rome, and though this was a great sacrifice the humble monk obeyed without a murmur, and appointed Landuin prior of Chartreuse in his place. His departure was so bitterly lamented by the monks, that he was constrained to take some of them with him, and these, by order of the Pope, had a house assigned to them, where,

though in the city, they might follow the rule of the desert. But it was not long before they began to sigh for the solitude they had lost, and S. Bruno persuaded them to return to Chartreuse, though he could not be the companion of their journey. His Holiness now desired to confer the Archbishopric of Reggio upon Bruno, but the Saint protested against it with such earnestness that he overcame, and was even permitted to retire to a wilderness in the mountains of Calabria. Having gained some new companions in Rome, he retired with them there, in the year 1090, and found his solitude even dearer since he had been forced to dwell amidst the distractions of the world.

S. Bruno wrote many valuable works, among which are his Commentaries on the Psalter, and on the Epistles of S. Paul; he also composed an elegy in fourteen verses, "On the Contempt of the World." A short time after he had established his new hermitage, he was one day discovered by Roger, Count of Sicily and Calabria, who was hunting near,

and who entering into conversation with him, was so deeply sensible of his sanctity that he desired to lavish gifts upon him. But finding that S. Bruno refused all he might offer, the Count enlarged the hermitage, and built for him a church dedicated to Our Lady and S. Stephen, which was afterwards known by the name of "S. Stephen in bosco."

This charity was not suffered to lose its reward, even in this world, for while Count Roger was besieging the city of Capua, he would have been betrayed, and given up to his enemies by a treacherous commander in his army, had not S. Bruno appeared to him on the night of the plot and given him warning of it. After this, the Count felt more honour for the Saint than before, and would have bestowed all his goods upon the monastery had it been permitted him.

Though at a distance from Chartreuse, S. Bruno still continued to guide the monks there by his wise counsel both in spiritual and temporal difficulties, entreating them to strive

for the most perfect spirit of humility and contempt of the world. About the close of the month of September, in the year 1101, the Saint became very ill, and it having been revealed to him that he should die, he called his monks round his bed, and in their presence made a public confession of his whole life, and then a fervent profession of faith. On the 6th of October he resigned his soul into the hands of God in perfect peace and joy.

We read that it was the constant meditation upon eternity which animated S. Bruno with so ardent a desire of solitude and penance; he would pass entire nights in beseeching for the most grievous pains, and sufferings, rather than that he might be deprived of God eternally. The cell of S. Bruno is shown at Chartreuse standing on a rock situated in the coldest and most exposed part of the desert. In it there is a picture of him, drawn during life, which represents his face as pale as that of a corpse, and his body emaciated by long penance. In old times there were nine monas-

teries of the Carthusian Order in England, the chief of which were one at Sheen, in Surrey, the other in London, which has been corrupted into the name of the "Charter-house," and became a great public school after the old monastery had been swept away.



S. Norbert.

A.D. 1134.

IN the year 1080, S. Norbert was born at Xanten, in the duchy of Cleves ; but no records of his early life have been preserved to us. Being of noble family, he was admitted as sub-deacon, so that a rich canonry might be bestowed on him ; and for a time he lived a most worldly life, richly attired, and indulging in every pleasure. But God had a great work for Norbert to accomplish, and his soul was to be awakened by an accident which should impress upon him the uncertainty of life. One day as he rode on horseback, followed by an attendant, a violent

storm broke, and a sudden blaze of lightning so alarmed Norbert's horse that it threw its rider, who for some time lay in a state of unconsciousness. On coming to himself, one thought haunted him—had the lightning struck him, what then? Where would his soul have gone? Hitherto Norbert had refused to be made deacon and priest, now he most earnestly desired to give his life to the service of God; and setting himself to the necessary preparations, he received both Orders in one day. His first act as a priest was to retire quietly to his house in Xanten, and relinquish those luxurious habits which had become natural to him; and after a short time God inspired him with a longing to leave the world he had loved too well. Clothed in a garment of lambskin he began to preach of reform to his fellow-canons, but instead of listening they ridiculed him, and treated him with contempt and scorn.

Norbert next gave up all his possessions to the poor, and went barefoot to the Abbey of

S. Giles, near Nismes, where the Pope Gelasius II. had taken refuge. From him, S. Norbert received permission to preach in all countries, and he began his work at once in France. Hearing that the Bishop of Cambrai was at Valenciennes, and having known him well at court in former days, the Saint sent word that he would like to see him. The Bishop marvelled at the change in his friend; once richly attired, he was now clad in poor garments, barefoot, and worn with fasting and labour, but he embraced him with such affection that one of his chaplains afterwards inquired why it was. Then said the prelate: "That man was once the gayest and most refined at the Emperor's Court. If now he is poor and despised, it is because he has refused honour, and renounced wealth."

The chaplain was so struck by these words that he began to seek out the society of S. Norbert, and not long afterwards became one of his followers. At the council following the election of Callixtus II. to the Pontificate,

S. Norbert came to ask permission to continue his apostolic labour, and the Pope was about to grant his request, when the Bishop of Laon stepped forward entreating that Norbert might be sent to reform the Abbey of S. Martin at Laon.

The Saint protested, but the Pope laid his commands upon him; and accordingly when the Bishop at the close of the council returned to Laon, he took Norbert with him. His first step was to require the canons to make the vow of poverty, but they refused, and as they continued obstinate he was compelled during the winter months to reside in the household of the Bishop. But when spring came, this Bishop promised to procure land for building if Norbert would found a new Order, and he agreed to this, and passing through a peaceful valley, opening from the forest of Coucy, he found a deserted chapel, and at once exclaimed: "This is the place which the Lord has chosen for us." Entering the chapel he remained there in prayer the whole night, and in vision

beheld a long procession of men in white robes carrying cross and candles, winding their way from the chapel through the trees beyond. On the morrow when he rejoined the Bishop, he said that he had resolved to build there, and he should give a white habit to his brethren. So in this valley called Prémontré, S. Norbert established the first house of his Order. In the year 1120 the Bishop took their penitential garments from Norbert and his companion Hugh, and put upon them a white habit, such as the Saint had seen in his vision, and many men joining them they adopted the rule of S. Augustine. Quickly the Order spread, and other houses were founded, one of which was the work of Gotfried, Count of Kappenberg, who converted his own castle into a Norbertine monastery. When the Archbishopric of Magdeburg fell vacant, the Emperor Lothair appointed Norbert to it, but it was an honour which the Saint would have refused had he not been commanded to take it. He arrived at Magde-

burg without announcing his coming, and clothed in an old patched habit knocked at the palace door.

“Be off with you,” cried the porter, “we do not admit beggars here.” But when S. Norbert dwelt there, his gates were never closed to the poorest mendicant who came to receive the alms which the good Archbishop distributed so freely.

He now founded several houses of his Order in his own diocese, and tried to raise the clergy to a higher standard ; but he met with much opposition, and the citizens attempted his life when he was in the cathedral one day, so that he was obliged to leave the altar and vested as he was take refuge in one of the towers for two days, at the end of which time some of the mob broke in. The Archbishop’s chamberlain was killed, but he himself advanced towards the rioters in his mitre and vestments, and they recoiled with a sudden awe ; and at the same moment the Count of Magdeburg arrived and dispersed them. That

being done, S. Norbert descended to the church, and proceeding to the altar, offered up the Holy Sacrifice as calmly as if nothing unusual had occurred. Still, angry feeling ran high although the tumult was quelled, so that the Archbishop deemed it wise to retire to his castle of Halle.

But when he was gone, the people of Magdeburg were sorry for their treatment of him—perhaps, also, they feared he would appeal to the Emperor, so they entreated him to return, and received him with every mark of respect and affection. S. Norbert was called to take a very prominent part in political affairs at the time when most unhappy dissensions prevailed at Rome, and when his influence had done much towards reinstating Pope Innocent, he received the pallium from the Holy Father, and was constituted primate over the whole of Germany.

At the age of fifty-two years S. Norbert died, after having spent twenty years in the service of Christ. His body was interred at

Magdeburg, but when that city became Lutheran the Emperor Ferdinand II. conveyed the relics of the Saint to Prague, where they are still preserved.



S. Otto.

A.D. 1139.

OTTTO was the son of poor Swabian parents who with difficulty managed to give him an education, and dying while he was but a youth, left him dependent on his own exertions for a livelihood.

It was told Otto that in Poland there would be a good prospect of success in starting a school for boys, so he went there and gained some scholars, the number of which rapidly increased, while he became famous for his learning.

In the year 1087, Ladislaus, Duke of Poland, wished to marry the sister of the King of Hungary, and one of the ambassadors chosen to negotiate the matter was Otto, who after a

successful issue was made chaplain to the Duke.

It seems a little doubtful how he came to return to Germany, but we find him occupying the post of chaplain to Henry IV. to whom he showed himself a most faithful friend and ally during his severe troubles.

In the year 1102 the See of Bamberg was left vacant by the death of Rupert, but the Emperor deferred for six months the appointment of a bishop.

On the Sunday before the Festival of Christmas, when the time of waiting had expired, the clergy and people of Bamberg ascended the hill of S. Michael in procession, seeking the intercession of the Archangel that a suitable prelate might be given them, and on the Christmas day they deputed certain priests and nobles to go to the Emperor and hear his decision.

After Henry had spoken to them on the qualifications necessary in one who should be their pastor, he added, "And such a bishop

have we sought for you," taking the hand of Otto as he spoke.

The delegates looked into each other's faces with vexation and disappointment. "We do not know this man, your majesty, nor whence he comes," said one; but the Emperor replied that *he* knew him, and knowing too his wisdom, his sanctity, his patience, had determined on appointing him Bishop of Bamberg.

Otto knelt before Henry, and with tears protested his unworthiness to hold such an office, whereupon the Emperor cried, "See what the ambition of this man is! This is the third see that he refuses. What think you of him? We designed him for Augsburg, but he, thinking it just that those who had preceded him in the cares and anxieties of our court should first have their rest, refused to accept it. So was it also with the bishopric of Halberstedt; and surely the church of Bamberg is divinely reserved for him."

Upon this Henry placed in Otto's hands

the pastoral staff, and on his finger the ring, and the delegates from Bamberg acknowledged him as their Father and Bishop.

Then said the Emperor, "Receive him with all reverence and honour, for before Almighty God I testify that I know no mortal man whom I could trust to execute his duties more honestly and conscientiously. As long as I live, he who touches that man, touches the apple of my eye."

Upon the Vigil of the Purification the new Bishop arrived at Bamberg, and as its towers and spires came in sight, he dismounted from his horse, and taking off his shoes, walked barefoot through the snow to the church of S. George, where he was met by clergy and people, who conducted him to the cathedral.

S. Otto set to work to build monasteries in his diocese, and to restore his cathedral which had been burnt down. An earthquake had also destroyed the church of S. Michael, and this he rebuilt from its foundations.

It is told that on one occasion the Bishop

went to remove some relics from the little church of Buchelbach, that they might be enshrined in some more fitting place ; and taking in his own hand the crow-bar to break the seal of the locker in which the relics were kept, some of the red wax oozed out in the shape of drops of blood, which so startled S. Otto that he began to think he had committed sacrilege and in his distress fled to the Abbot of Michaelsberg, begging to be received as a monk and so escape his heavy responsibilities.

The Abbot perceived that Otto was greatly agitated, and he at once required a vow of obedience from him, which being given, he said : “ On your obedience I now enjoin on you to return to the discharge of your episcopal duties ; and thus the Bishop felt constrained to take up again the government of his diocese.

In the year 1125 Germany was visited with the horrors of famine and pestilence, and during that terrible time S. Otto was an indefatigable worker, visiting every cottage and every hospital that he might comfort the

sufferers, and administer the Sacraments to them. One very hot day, as the good Bishop was on his way to one of the hospitals with only a server-boy attending him, he came across the dead body of a woman which had been left in a bed of nettles. Otto placed his hands under the shoulders of the corpse and bade the lad take up the feet; but the body was already putrefying and most offensive, so that the server cried, "Let me run for help! do not defile your sacred hands."

"God forbid," replied the Bishop, "that touching a child of Adam and a daughter of the Church should be defilement;" and though the boy turned sick and faint, so that he could render no assistance, the holy Otto carried the corpse to the cemetery and there interred it.

In the year 1124, the good Bishop of Bamberg received a most urgent request to come and preach Christianity to the people of Pomerania, and though now advanced in age he would not refuse such a call to work for God. The way led through a vast forest,

through which the Bishop and his attendants crept in the obscure light, while serpents rustled in the long grass, and ever and again the baggage-horses floundered in the swamps; but when at length they saw the barbarians, it was enough to inspire even the stoutest-hearted with terror. But S. Otto opened his presents, which gave great pleasure, and very soon the people began to listen to the teaching of the missionaries, and asked to receive baptism.

After a successful mission, S. Otto returned to his own country and diocese in 1125; but he still desired to do more among the heathen, and two years later started again for Pomerania, bearing as before numerous costly presents. This time he proceeded in a somewhat different direction, visiting among other places the town of Wolgast, where he destroyed a splendid heathen temple and raised a Christian church, and after administering baptism to a large number of converts, he passed on to Guzkow, where he did the same

work. Beginning there also the erection of a church, he begged Mitzlav, the chief, to release all captives upon the day of its dedication, a request which was granted. It happened on the eve of the dedication that there were not sufficient ashes for the strewing of the floor, and Ulric, one of the priests, went rambling among the castle vaults in search of more. Hearing a low moaning near him, he looked carefully in the direction whence it came, and saw an emaciated hand extended towards him, and presently found a young man loaded with chains on his feet, his hands and his neck. As soon as possible Ulric brought an interpreter to the vaults, and thus heard that the miserable captive was the son of a Danish chief who was five hundred marks in Mitzlav's debt, and because he could not pay it, this youth had been carried off. The story was told to S. Otto, who refused to proceed with the dedication of the church until this poor young prisoner was set free.

One day, when the Christian [Bishop was

preaching in the market-place of the town of Stettin, a heathen priest advanced blowing a trumpet, and calling upon the people to destroy this enemy of the gods. Quickly every lance was pointed at him, but Otto looked at his opponents so composedly that they quailed beneath his glance. Then advancing with his clergy, he threw down the heathen altar which had been put up in the church; but perhaps things would not have ended so peaceably had not news come that a huge whale was cast up on the beach. This was delightful to the people, who enjoyed feasting on its carcase, and believing that the whale had been brought there by the virtues of S. Otto, they forthwith expelled the heathen priest, and declared they preferred the doctrine of the Christian Bishop.

Feeling that he had now laid the foundation for future work among the Pomeranians, the good old Bishop started on his return to his diocese, passing through Poland, and having an interview with King Boleslas, who presented him with a magnificent coverlet. On reaching

Bamberg, S. Otto gave it to a poor paralytic man, though many were angry with him for so doing.

Very gentle and painless was the death of this good Bishop, on the 30th June, 1139, and he was buried in the church of S. Michael. A number of miracles were worked there, and many fever-stricken persons have recovered health by drinking from a silver-gilt vessel enclosing a portion of S. Otto's skull.

Some of his bones are preserved in different churches of Germany; one is at Lisbon; and at the Cathedral of Bamberg there is not only an arm-bone, but the Bishop's chasuble and stole which he wore.



S. Stephen of Hungary.

A.D. 1038.

HIS mother of this Saint had before his birth a dream, in which she beheld Stephen, the Apostolic Protomartyr, who told her that God would give her a son who should be called by his name, and who should be the means of converting his people to the Christian Faith.

When, therefore, the child came into the world, his mother tended him with the utmost care, and in due time he was given into the charge of two Benedictine monks for education.

Geza, the father of the child, was not a

Christian, but he did not prevent his wife bringing up her son according to her own faith, and at sixteen years of age he received in baptism the name of Stephen.

In the year 977 Geza died, and thus Stephen at the age of twenty became chief of the Hungarians, who were then but a wild and untutored people.

They revolted against their Christian ruler ; but Stephen succeeded in subduing them, and determining to be a duly constituted king, sent to the Pope to obtain a consecrated crown and sceptre. He also asked priests in great numbers to come among his people, and rid them of their old superstition, which had taught them to pray to sacred oak-trees or rocks or fountains.

The coronation of Stephen took place in the year 1000. The Archbishop of Kalocsa placed upon the head of the monarch the crown which the Pope had sent, after receiving which he mounted upon a white horse and rode to the summit of a mound in the market-place

of Presburg, and having sworn that he would respect the rights of the people, and rule justly over them, he waved his sword northward and southward, eastward and westward, to show that he would defend his country from enemies, from whichever quarter they might come.

The crown, sceptre, shoes and mantle were taken after the coronation to the royal castle of Presburg, and there preserved with care.

Soon after he had received his crown, Stephen was married to Gisela, of whom little has been told excepting that she had great skill with her needle, and embroidered the figures of the Virgin Saints upon a blue satin mantle, which for centuries has been worn by every Hungarian king on his coronation-day.

New revolts however broke out, and Stephen was compelled to take up arms to maintain Christianity. He had a son born to him in the year 1004, who received the name of Emeric, and was sent for education to some monks, who instructed him in his duty to God.

S. Stephen placed all his dominions under the special patronage of the Blessed Virgin ; he accustomed himself to distribute large alms to the beggars who thronged the palace gate, and was especially charitable to widows and orphans. One day there was an unusually large crowd of people waiting for charity, and some among them in their eagerness to get nearest to the King, pushed him down. Before he could rise a thief made off with his purse, and some of the rougher beggars struck at their benefactor with their crutches and sticks ; and yet the holy Stephen was not angry at such treatment. Raising his eyes he cried : " See, O Queen of Heaven, in what manner I am requited by these members of Thy Son ! But as they are His poor, I receive their ill-treatment with joy of heart."

Many were the benefactions of S. Stephen : the monastery of SS. Peter and Paul at Buda was his foundation ; a hostel for pilgrims on the Vatican Hill was built by him, another at Constantinople, and another with a church

and convent at Jerusalem for the entertainment of pilgrims from Hungary, who had journeyed to the Holy Land.

When his son had reached the age of twenty-four years, Stephen determined to place the government in his hands; but God's Will was otherwise, and just six days before that appointed for his coronation, Prince Emeric died, having lived a most holy and blameless life. The King was plunged into the deepest sorrow by this death of the son he had so fondly loved; but he said: "God loved him, and therefore took him away early."

Having thus lost his direct heir, the King felt some doubt as to who would be a suitable successor, and some jealousy arose between his cousins and nephews concerning the question of the future crown. One night S. Stephen was awakened from his sleep by a sudden noise, which proved to be the fall of the sword from the hand of a man who had concealed himself with the intention of murdering the King. "If God be for me, who shall be

against me?" said Stephen quietly, upon which the assassin fell on his knees, asking pardon, and declaring that he had been employed by the King's cousins, Andrew and Bela. However, this was not true, for the innocence of these men was proved, and it was believed to be the plot of Stephen's own sister Gisela, who wanted to obtain the crown for her son. The King so thoroughly forgave her, that he adopted his nephew for his heir, although he was subsequently driven from the throne by the Hungarian nobles. While S. Stephen was engaged in the erection of the cathedral of Buda, he was attacked by fever; and though his friends looked for his recovery, he himself felt convinced that his death was at hand. Having given his last instructions, and again commended his people to the patronage of the Mother of God, he began his preparation for his approaching end; and having received the last Sacraments, expired upon the Feast of the Assumption, 1038, being sixty years of age. Forty-five years later, the body

of S. Stephen was translated to a magnificent shrine in the cathedral of Buda, and that day—the 20th August—is always observed in Hungary as his chief festival.



S. Nilus.

A.D. 1005.

NILUS was the name taken by this Saint upon the day of his religious profession, for he was baptised in the name of Nicolas. We know nothing of his childhood, excepting that he was of Greek origin and born in Calabria during the year 910 ; his story begins when he was married, and engaged in the business of the world, yet striving to give his chief care to the love and service of God. But there came a time when religious exercises grew wearisome, when prayer was neglected, and thus unarmed in the combat on which he had entered, Nicolas

fell into many faults and even grave sins. But God would not let him be lost, and he was aroused to see the danger of his way by the death of his wife, for whom he had entertained a most devoted love. During a time of solitude and deep contrition for past neglect and sin, Nicolas resolved to enter some religious house, and end his days apart from the world in penance and in prayer. So he sought admittance in the monastery of S. John the Baptist at Rossana, and passed from that to two other houses, in all of which he was highly esteemed for piety and fervour. After the lapse of some years, Nilus obtained permission to seek some solitary place where he might more perfectly serve God and secure the salvation of his soul ; so with two companions he went into a forest, and made his dwelling in a hermitage near the chapel of S. Michael.

But the fame of S. Nilus got noised abroad, and from all parts people came to visit him, seeking counsel in perplexity and sorrow, and

learning from his lips how to advance in the Divine service.

Some there were who had no higher purpose than to test the knowledge of the renowned hermit, which Nilus soon discovered; and when one of them put the question, whether or no Solomon was saved, he answered with some sharpness: "Whether Solomon be saved or not matters little to you; but what does concern you is whether you yourself may escape damnation. Seek to be assured that you are in the way of safety, and do not trouble your mind as to the state of Solomon."

At the time when Philagathus, Bishop of Piacenza, became the Anti-Pope of the Roman Republic, Nilus wrote to him, being of his own race and country, and urged him to shun the temptation to which ambition was leading him; but his words made no impression, and Philagathus assumed the name of Pope John XVI. When he had to fly from Rome, S. Nilus begged permission to give him shelter, but his request was not granted him.

When the Emperor Otho made a visit to the chapel of S. Michael he came to see Nilus, who met him at the door of his retreat. Taking the old Abbot by the hand, Otho said to him : " Our Lord bade His disciples go forth without silver, or purse, or staff, and with but one coat. But as He drew near His Passion, He said : ' Let him take scrip and purse.' So you, my Father, went forth poor and destitute when you were young ; but now that old age and death creeps on, take purse and scrip which I now offer you."

S. Nilus refused the gift gently, yet firmly, and said : " I ask of you, sire, but one thing, and that is, that you will think of your responsibilities as a ruler over men. For their welfare you will have to give account to God. Remember that, and I have no wish for more."

At length the incursions of the Saracens made it impossible for S. Nilus to remain in Calabria, and he took refuge with the Benedictine monks at Monte Cassino ; but finding that a more perfect solitude was necessary to

his soul, he retired to the sea-coast and spent ten years there. After that time the now aged Saint went with his disciples to the hermitage of S. Agatha, at Tusculum; but very soon after God called him to his rest, having left him in the world to the advanced age of ninety-five years. A Greek life of S. Nilus has been written by a monk of his own time.



S. Frica.

A.D. 1253.

THIS Saint was poor and of humble birth; yet she became singularly holy, by means of trial and suffering, and her name is specially dear to the hearts of those whose birthplace, like her own, is Tuscany.

In her first youth, Frica was possessed of singular beauty, but her whole body became suddenly paralysed, and never again was restored. She had ever been modest and retiring, nor do we hear that her loveliness of person was the occasion of any vanity or desire of human regard; but yet God willed that she

should become purified by affliction and pain, and thus be early made ready for heaven.

During the six years Frica was helpless she lay on one side upon a hard board, nor would she permit any of the neighbours to contrive a softer bed, because she said it gave her joy to think that in a little measure she resembled Our Lord stretched upon His Cross. So poor were they that the mother of this maiden had to beg bread, for her husband was dead, and they had no means of supporting themselves ; and while she was absent the rats, which swarmed in that wretched hut, would come and attack Frica, and yet not a murmur escaped her, not one desire to escape the misery of her earthly lot.

But greater suffering and distress came, for her mother dying, Frica was left alone and utterly helpless ; and though sometimes the neighbours assisted her, she was for the most part neglected, and it was evident that she could not live much longer.

She had a very strong devotion to S. Gregory

the Great, and one night in her pain and loneliness, it seemed that he appeared to her in glorious vision, and bade her be comforted. "Dear child," he said, "upon my festival Christ will give thee rest." Great joy filled the heart of Frica at this promise, for death was her one desire, although she had prayed to be made willing to live as long as God should see fit; and on S. Gregory's Feast she closed her eyes on earth, to awake in heaven.

When the neighbours raised her body from the board where she had lain so long patient and meek and uncomplaining, the most fragrant white violets were strewed there, and to this day the peasants of the village call them by the name of S. Frica's flowers.



S. Ida of Toggenberg.

A.D. 1226.

IDA, Countess of Toggenberg, was the child of Count Hartmann of Kirchberg, in Swabia, who, with his wife, was universally beloved for his goodness to the poor and zeal for God's cause. From a child Ida resembled her parents in piety and benevolence, and found her chief happiness in relieving those who were in any way distressed.

As she grew to womanhood, her beauty and her many virtues were the theme of all tongues, and so it happened that the Count of Toggenberg desired to see her, be-

lieving that she possessed all the qualities he desired in a wife. Only a few days' sojourn at Kirchberg decided him to seek the hand of this fair and gentle Ida, and her parents at once consented to the union.

The maiden herself felt some anxiety regarding her future, as she observed that the young Count gave way to fits of passion upon the very least provocation; and when she left her father's castle, tears fell from her mild blue eyes.

She found that her fears and forebodings had not been unfounded; the violence of Henry of Toggenberg was something terrible to witness, although after each outbreak he was grieved for what he had done, and thoroughly subdued. Ida never murmured, never willingly angered him, but when her sorrow was greatest she would kneel longer in prayer in the chapel of a convent to which she daily resorted, and ask grace to endure, and wisdom to help her husband to conquer his violence.

She had one enemy in her husband's retinue, an Italian, who tried to suggest evil in her conduct and inflame the Count with anger against her; especially he said that the Lady Ida was too kind and courteous to a servant named Cuno, who had once saved her from a great peril.

This base man had much influence over his master, and thus Count Toggenberg grew harsh to his patient wife, whose only comfort was in pouring out her many griefs to the Mother of Sorrows. But she grew very sad, and often stood at her window looking out northward towards the home of her happy, childish days, until tears would start to her eyes and fall down upon her sewing. One day she took from a chest the attire she had worn on her marriage morning, and placed it in the sunny window to air it, then she looked at the betrothal ring which Count Henry had placed on her finger, and presently laid that in the window intending to polish it. But she was called away at that moment in

some haste, and when she returned the ring was gone, for a raven had seen the sparkling jewel and carried it to its nest.

After a long time spent in vain search, Ida resolved not to mention the loss, lest it should be the occasion of one of her husband's fits of passion, and she replaced her bridal clothing in the chest where it was before.

Some days later, Cuno was out in the forest and on his way home he climbed a tree to reach a raven's nest, where to his surprise he found a sparkling ring. He did not know it had belonged to the young Countess, and therefore placed it on his own finger and rode on to the castle, little thinking what sorrow would ensue.

Very soon the Count Henry noticed the ring and recognised it as that which he had himself placed on Ida's hand on her betrothal-day. Filled with rage, and waiting not to ask or hear any explanation, he ordered the unfortunate Cuno to be fastened by his feet to the tail of an untamed horse and then driven down

the rocky path from the castle-door. The frightened servants durst not disobey their master, and the horse plunging violently, dragged Cuno over the rocks till he was killed. Then Henry of Toggenberg rushed upstairs to his wife's room, and seizing her, flung her from the castle window down into the ravine below.

But God interposed, and miraculously preserved the life of Ida, for when she reached the bottom of the steep cliff, she was stunned but not otherwise hurt ; and having recovered consciousness she took shelter in a rocky cavern, and lived upon the roots and berries she could find. Thus she passed several years, making clothing for herself from the plaited bark of the birch tree ; she found a peace in this life which she had never enjoyed in her husband's castle, and made a vow to spend the rest of her days for God alone.

The grief and self-reproach of the Count were very bitter ; he had repented of his wickedness as soon as the fit of rage had spent itself,

and he tried to forget his misery by plunging into war. Seventeen years had gone by since the day of the Countess Ida's supposed death, when a huntsman, who was pursuing game in an unfrequented part of the forest, came upon a cave within which sat a pale woman clad in a coarse garment of birch-bark. Changed and aged as she was by time and hardship, he recognised in her the Lady of Toggenberg, and began to speak of the Count's remorse.

Ida bade him return to the castle and say that she still lived, and when the proud Henry heard this news he hastened to the cave where dwelt his long-lost wife. Though she fully forgave him, she would not return again to the castle, as he entreated her; she felt unfit now to live in the world, and moreover had vowed to be God's spouse. One request she made, and that was to have a little cell near the convent-chapel where she had prayed so often in former years, and with sorrow the Count consented.

So S. Ida took possession of her little

refuge, where she spent some years, until visited by so many people that she obtained admission within the convent walls, and there died a holy and peaceful death in the year 1226.

A legend tells that a stag used to come out of the thick forest glade at nightfall, with fire issuing from its horns, by the light of which Ida read her Office during the years she dwelt in her solitary cavern. This gave rise to her being represented in art with a stag by her side.



S. Juliana of Cornillon.

A.D. 1258.

IN a little hamlet near the town of Liège, a child was born in the year 1192, who received in baptism the name of Juliana. Being left an orphan while yet scarcely beyond her infancy, she, with her elder sister Agnes, was placed in the care of the nuns in the Augustinian convent of Cornillon, near Liège; but as the Superior dreaded that the little ones might suffer from the disorders of the sick whom the sisters nursed, she sent them to a distant farm which was looked after by a nun named Sapientia. Lovingly, yet wisely, did the good sister tend

these motherless children, striving to correct their faults and train them to future holiness. We learn that when little Juliana was about seven years old, she resolved to fast, because S. Nicolas had also fasted ; so one day she did not eat the breakfast put before her. As a penance, Sister Sapientia sent her to kneel for a few moments in the snow, then bade her run to the church and confess to the priest that she had fasted without permission. The priest received her confession, and sent her back, telling her to ask Sapientia to boil her an egg, which she was to eat at once. While still a child the holy seasons of the Church made deep impression upon her, and when the *Vexilla Regis* was sung she would tremble with emotion, while tears fell from her eyes.

When Juliana was fourteen years old, she begged to receive the veil at Cornillon. Her sister Agnes was dead, and the wealth her parents had left behind them was now hers, but she gladly relinquished all to follow Christ

in poverty and obscurity. Sister Sapientia was at this time Superior of the convent ; it was a poor house, but Juliana's property enriched it. The young religious was very studious, but of all books she loved best S. Augustine's writings.

In the year 1208, while praying, she had a vision, in which she seemed to perceive the moon with a dark stain across it, and she told it to her Superior, but it was not until two years later that she understood its meaning. Then, in her sleep, she saw that the moon was the Church, and the stain signified that one festival was wanting to complete the different seasons. The Incarnation, the Presentation in the Temple, the Resurrection, Ascension, and every other sacred mystery of the life of Our Blessed Lord had its fitting celebration—save that most sweet, most precious gift He made to man—even His own Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist.

About 1225, Juliana was elected to be Superior in place of Sapientia, lately deceased,

and well did she fulfil the office, securing the love and confidence of her spiritual daughters.

Years were passing on ; it was long since the explanation of her vision had been granted her, and she had struggled against the belief that God had intrusted to a weak woman the work of promoting the love and reverence of Christ's Body and Blood ; but at length she could struggle no longer, she knew the time had come for her to speak.

There was a holy woman living as a recluse in a cell upon the opposite side of the river, and to her Juliana opened her heart, begging her to pray that God would let His holy Will be done. "Pray also for me," said the recluse ; "and ask that He may quicken in me the same love for the Holy Sacrament which consumes thy heart."

About this time Juliana received into the community one in whom she felt able to repose every confidence, and to her she spoke of the great desire of her heart. But Isabella's reply overwhelmed Juliana with sorrow.

"Why have a special Festival to commemorate that which is recalled to us daily in Holy Mass?" she said; but a year later a vision was granted her, in which she saw the Saints pleading for the festival, and from that time all her scruples and doubts were ended.

There was a learned and pious ecclesiastic named John of Lausanne, and to him Juliana revealed her visions, and having consulted with other learned men, he found them unanimous in believing that the institution of the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament would raise the devotion of all Catholics.

But when Juliana applied to them to compose an Office in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, they declined the task; and the only one who would try to do it was a young brother of the monastery, who said it must be upon one condition, "That when I take my pen thou wilt have recourse to prayer."

So Juliana applied herself to prayer, and John of Cornillon composed the Office which was used in the church of S. Martin, and

also in other churches of that date, though in the present day no copies of it are in existence. The Office of the Blessed Sacrament for the Feast of Corpus Christi was, however, written afterwards at the command of the Pope by S. Thomas Aquinas.

But while many applauded the desire of S. Juliana, others regarded her as a mere enthusiast and visionary, and even made jests at her expense.

Another difficulty arose, for some said that the Saint had made use of certain sums of money belonging to the community, for the purpose of bribing the Bishop to consent to the introduction of the new festival at Liège; but in the end all calumny and all opposition were silenced, the longing desire of S. Juliana accomplished, and in 1247 the Feast of Corpus Christi was celebrated in the church of S. Martin.

But trials were not ended for Juliana; it was God's Will that she should by them be exercised in patience and resignation, and soon

the spirit of enmity ran so high that she was obliged to leave her convent and take refuge in a house charitably lent to her by the Arch-deacon of Liège.

Near Namur there was an abbey where at length Juliana was received with much kindness; but in the year 1256 the town was besieged, and the Saint took refuge in company with the Abbess in Fosses.

There she became ill, and feeling convinced that death would be the termination of her sufferings, she sent to ask John of Lausanne, who had so long known her, to come to her and hear something she desired to reveal to him. The country was in so disturbed and unsettled a state just at that time, that it was impossible for him to reach her, and so S. Juliana departed this life upon the 5th of April, 1258, without telling any one else what she had wished to say. Some of her relics were deposited in the church of S. Martin, at Liège, and some are enshrined at S. John Baptist, in Namur.



S. Hedwiges, Widow.

A.D. 1243.

HEDWIGES was one of many children, born to Bertold of Audecho, and Agnes his wife, daughter of the Count of Rotheles. From her infancy the little girl seemed naturally grave and thoughtful, and of a marked inclination to everything holy and pious. While still very young, she was placed in a convent at Lutzingen, in Franconia, where she remained until she was twelve years old, and was then removed to become the wife of the Duke Henry of Silesia. Hedwiges felt great reluctance to the thought of this marriage, but seeing it God's Will that

she should submit to the desire of her parents in this matter, she consented to it. In this new state of life the Saint maintained the same fidelity in her religious duties as she had practised in the quiet and seclusion of the convent, and by God's grace became a model of prudence and piety as a wife and mother, striving daily to sanctify herself and her household.

Six children were born to Hedwiges, and after the birth of the last, the Saint induced her husband to consent to a mutual vow of entire consecration to God; and ever after they lived as brother and sister during the thirty years which passed before the death of Henry.

But great sorrow came to the holy Hedwiges, by reason of the enmity between her two elder sons, Henry and Conrad; yet in time of trial, as in time of joy, her whole comfort came from heaven, and in faithful perseverance in her pious exercises. It was about this time that she gave up her dowry to

the Duke, in order to induce him to found a monastery of Cistercian nuns, at Trebnitz, near Breslan, which he endowed sufficiently for the maintenance of one thousand inmates—one hundred of whom should be religious, and the rest young ladies of families which had been reduced by adversity, and who might here be well educated, and afterwards sufficiently provided for to settle in the world, unless they desired to take vows in that or any other religious house. The building of this convent was commenced in 1203, being completed and the church dedicated in the year 1219. Though Hedwiges dwelt in a palace, her life was more austere than that of many a professed religious; her fasts and vigils were frequent, her mortifications severe, and when compelled to travel, she always had thirteen poor persons in her company, whom she maintained in honour of Christ and His Apostles, always waiting on them, and seeing that they were well-fed, even though her own meals were of the coarsest viands.

She often said that she ardently desired to have those words of Christ addressed to her in the last day: "I was sick and in prison, and you visited Me;" and thus she relieved and comforted all who were in distress, seeing in them the person of her Lord.

During the earlier part of her married life, though obliged to wear apparel suited to her rank, S. Hedwiges was careful to avoid all needless ornament and decoration, and after her vow, which made her the spouse of Christ, she wore only clothing made of a plain grey stuff. After a time the Duke consented to her removing to Trebnitz, where she made her dwelling near the convent, and occasionally asked admittance there for a few days, or retreat, during which she followed the rule of the community.

Every day was observed by Hedwiges as a fast, excepting Sundays, and great festivals, when she permitted herself two small meals; but during forty years she abstained altogether from meat, excepting once when in a

severe illness, and at a time when there was a pestilence raging in Poland, she took a little in obedience to the command of the Pope's legate.

She would go to church through the ice and snow, carrying her shoes to put on if she saw any one approaching, and caring not that her feet left a bloody track upon the road, for suffering of every kind was precious to her. When her maids, who were far better clad, complained of the piercing cold in attending Hedwiges to church, she never murmured, but feigned not to perceive it. Although her chamber contained a good bed, this holy Duchess never used it, choosing rather to take her short rest on the ground, and spending the greater part of the night in prayer. In the year 1238, the Duke died, and the nuns of Trebnitz shed many tears at the loss of their friend and benefactor; but Hedwiges did not weep because her husband was gone, for she said: "Would you oppose the Will of God? Our lives are His, and we

should find our comfort in whatever He is pleased to ordain, whether as to our own death, or as to the death of our friends."

From that time she wore the habit of the nuns, and lived under the rule of her own daughter, Gertrude, who was then Abbess; but she did not take religious vows, because she wished to retain the power of helping the poor by alms.

The humility of S. Hedwiges was deep, so that if any one blamed or reproved her, she felt it a matter for rejoicing. Once a nun said to her: "Why do you wear such rags? They ought rather to be given to the poor."

"If this habit is the cause of offence to any one, I am ready to correct my fault," replied the Saint; and she at once obtained another, though not a new one.

Three years after her husband's death, the eldest son of Hedwiges was killed in battle. His piety had won him the title of "Henry the Pious," and his remains were interred in the chapel of the Franciscan convent at Breslau.

When the news was taken to the Saint, she calmly said : " God has disposed of my son according to His good pleasure," and raising her eyes to heaven, prayed thus : " I thank Thee, my God, for having given me a son who always loved and honoured me, and never gave me the least occasion of displeasure. To see him alive was my great joy, yet I feel a still greater pleasure in seeing him by such a death deserve to be united to Thee in the kingdom of Thy glory. O God, with my whole heart I commend to Thee his dear soul."

The piety of this Saint drew down many heavenly favours upon her, and among others she was permitted the gift of healing. A nun at Trebnitz receiving the blessing of Hedwiges recovered her sight, though she had been perfectly blind ; and other similar cures were known by her means. In her last sickness no one thought that she was in danger, but the Saint was fully conscious of it, and begged to receive *Extreme Unction*.

On the 15th of October, 1243, God was pleased to call her to Himself, and her remains were interred at Trebnitz. In the year 1266, the Saint was canonised by Pope Clement IV., and then her relics were suitably enshrined.



S. Rosalia.

A.D. 1160.

LITTLE do we know of the early days of this virgin Saint, except that at fourteen years of age she had learned to fear the temptations of the Court of the King of Sicily, upon whom her father, Sinibald, was in attendance, and therefore she resolved to serve God in a life of solitude.

Among the rocky peaks of Monte Quisquina there were many caverns, and in one of these Rosalia took refuge, spending her days in prayer and holy contemplation, far removed from the pleasures of the world, which she had never loved. A legend tells that the

maiden was guided to her lonely retreat by two angels in robes of gleaming whiteness ; but after a while her former associates discovered her, and thus she found it necessary to conceal herself elsewhere ; and once again the heavenly messengers led her up the Monte Pellegrino, near the summit of which she found a grotto with so narrow an opening to it that few would find it out. Here, then, Rosalia made herself a bed of ferns and heather, and here she watched and prayed, with long stalactites hanging from the low roof and showing ghastly white in the gloomy cavern. Wild roses and other flowers grew on the mountain-side, which Rosalia gathered, and twining them into garlands, wreathed them round her crucifix as an offering to God. It does not seem that the friends of this holy maiden came to seek for her more ; unknown and forgotten by men she lived, and as unknown and forgotten she died ; and the water which fell with ceaseless drip from the roof of the grotto gradually encased her in a film of

lime, which thickened each year until it became a solid block.

So centuries passed by, and in 1624 the plague was raging in Palermo; men, women and children were its daily victims, and it seemed that neither tears nor prayers availed to stay the progress of the disease. One day, S. Rosalia appeared in vision to a sick person, bidding him make a pilgrimage to the summit of Monte Pellegrino if he would be cured. He went, and came back to his home restored to perfect health; and telling his friends what had happened, they began to think that perhaps the body of the Saint might be found in some cavern of the mountain.

In the search a block of stalagmite was broken, and within it were found the remains of Rosalia, which were translated to Palermo; and after being solemnly exposed for veneration, the plague entirely ceased. A church was erected near the cave, and pilgrims to the spot are shown the place where the Saint

slept, and also where the block lay in which her body was contained. With it there were found a terra-cotta crucifix and a little silver cross.

In the year 1663, Francis Castaglia, being, as it was supposed, on his death-bed in the Jesuit College, at Palermo, had a vision of S. Rosalia, who said to him: "Francis, I have prayed for thee, and thou shalt live," and he was immediately healed.

So vivid was the remembrance he had of the sweet face of the vision, that he caused it to be painted by his description. An engraving of this picture shows a young and fair maiden of some eighteen years, whose face wears a sweet though sad expression, and whose long hair falls almost to her feet, while in her hand she holds some of the mountain-flowers she was wont to gather when she was on earth.

The festival of S. Rosalia is kept annually at Palermo with great honour.



S. Notteburga.

A.D. 1313.



RAVELLERS in the Tyrol hear much of S. Notteburga, and see representations of her in her Tyrolese peasant's dress ; for she was born and died at Rottenberg, near Schwatz, and is highly venerated by the people of that part.

The childish days of Notteburga have not been described to us, but at eighteen years old we find her entering the service of the Count of Rottenberg, and being employed in the kitchen. There, in the midst of plenty, the Saint thought of those who were familiar

with want and care, and her heart being full of love to the poor for God's sake, she begged permission to give them what was left of each day's dinner, and her master and mistress did not refuse her. So we can almost picture this Tyrolese maiden distributing the scraps of food among the beggars who crowded at the gates, feeling, as she ministered to their wants, that she was really ministering to the Lord of men and angels ; for has He not said, " Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of these, My least brethren, ye have done it unto Me ?"

But time passed, and the Count was succeeded by his son, whose wife, Odilia, was not pleased with Notteburga's way of giving food to the poor, and forbade her continue it. So the Saint began to stint herself that she might help others, and especially on each Friday, when she touched nothing but some water and a little piece of bread, giving her usual food to those whose need was greatest.

At length Notteburga was sent away, and she sought out a farmer at Eben and entered

his service. Rich meadows lie all around this little village, and here Notteburga went out reaping like the rest ; but one Saturday evening, as she was busied thus, the church bell rang the Angelus, and feeling that Sunday was beginning, the Saint laid down her sickle.

Her master bade her continue her work ; but she gently told him she could not do so, for it was the time for prayer and thoughts of heavenly things ; however, he continued to command her, and then Notteburga took her sickle and threw it high in the air, where it hung suspended, as a sign that God approved of His servant's refusal to use it again till the Sunday was passed.

While Notteburga remained at Eben, the Countess Odilia died, whereupon she was recalled to Rottenberg, and again placed over the kitchen, with permission to relieve the poor, whom she loved and pitied.

There she remained until her death, in the forty-eighth year of her age, and when she

knew that her end was approaching, she entreated her master to have her body interred at Eben.

So the coffin containing her remains was placed in one of the rough carts drawn by oxen, and behind it the Count and his sons rode on horseback to the burial of their faithful servant. When they came to the river, the water divided, so that the oxen drew their burden across a dry path, and stopped to rest at Jenbach, where a small chapel was afterwards raised to mark the spot.

At length the procession wound up the steep hill, on the summit of which stands the church of S. Rupert, and there Notteburga's remains were laid to rest.

But when miracles began to be worked at her intercession, the Tyrolese remembered the many signs of sanctity which had marked her life, and in due time Notteburga was raised to the altars of the church. In 1718 her body was disinterred and moved to a more worthy shrine in the new church which was erected.

The field in which Notteburga was working with the reapers is still shown to those who visit the little village on the hill-side which looks over the beautiful valley of the Inn; and in her pictures she is usually represented with her sickle in her hand.



S. Rose of Viterbo.

A.D. 1252.

DURING the time when Italy was torn with the conflict between Guelphs and Ghibellines, a little child was born at Viterbo, who appeared to be destined even from infancy, for some uncommon life. We hear that even when she dropped crumbs from her hand, the birds would flutter round, and descending, peck from the tiny fingers, and every one loved the little Rose, who seemed like no other child. When old enough to understand what she heard, her mother led her to the church of the Franciscans, and here Rose listened to much concerning the enemies

of peace, and became full of horror of the Ghibellines, who were antagonistic to the rule of the Pope in Rome.

So the little girl spoke out her thoughts, and repeated scraps of what she heard from others, until the Ghibelline party in Viterbo turned both her and her parents out of the town.

It was winter-time, and thus the hardships of exile were increased tenfold, so that Rose, with her father and mother, had to walk through deep snow-drifts to reach Soriano, which was the nearest place where they could obtain shelter; and it seems that the parents were somewhat vexed with the child who had been the cause of disturbing them from their home. But Rose herself was in nowise cast down; and as they trudged along the wearying roads, she encouraged her parents by saying that they were suffering in a good cause.

Arriving at Soriano, they obtained some humble lodging, and in her sleep this child dreamed that an angel came to her side telling

her that there was good hope for the Guelphs. When morning came she told her dream in the town, and in a few days news came of the death of the Emperor Frederick, who headed the Ghibelline faction, so that Rose was looked upon as a young prophetess. Her father and mother did not long remain at Soriano, and made their way to Vitorchiano, where Rose addressed every one on the theme which occupied her whole thoughts, because on it the interests of the Church seemed to depend. It is hard for us to picture how the excitement of party spirit raged in the cities of Italy at that time, and therefore almost impossible to realise how a child of ten years old should raise her voice on such questions, and find many to listen either with sympathy or with opposition.

But those were strange times from which Rome emerged as conqueror at last; and little Rose of Viterbo seemed used as a special instrument by God to plead the cause of right before those who perhaps might not have

heeded one who was older. But at Vitorchiano there was a woman advocating the cause of the Emperor and the Ghibellines as loudly as the child could talk of the Guelphs and the Pope, but Rose was not abashed.

"I defy you to a contest," she said. "For twenty days I will keep a fast, and yet my body shall not be wasted. Do the same if you can."

The woman was very indignant, and said that a wolf (Ghuelph) could fast with ease; so then Rose ran to the priests of the city, entreating that a fire might be kindled through which God would enable her to walk uninjured.

She had her will, and the bells were rung to call the citizens together to behold the sight; and when the child had been some minutes in the flames she came forth perfectly uninjured.

After some time, Rose and her parents were allowed to go back to Viterbo, whereupon she begged to be received into a convent of

Poor Clares. The nuns refused her admission, perhaps as a trial, and then Rose said : " Although you reject me living, you will receive me when I am dead."

At the age of fifteen years this remarkable girl died, and was buried in the church of S. Maria, in Podio. But afterwards she was permitted to appear in vision to Pope Alexander IV., urging him to have her removed to the convent of Poor Clares in Viterbo, which he did. S. Rose was canonised in the year 1457, and her body remains incorrupt, and is in the church of Viterbo at the present day.



S. Bridget of Sweden.

A.D. 1373.

BRIDGET was the daughter of a Prince of Sweden, and his wife was also noble, being descended from the kings of the Goths; but they possessed that piety which is more to be esteemed than rank or honour, and their chief desire for their child was that she should become a faithful servant of God. This good mother dying while Bridget was yet in her infancy, the little child was trained by her aunt, who was also singularly pious and devout.

We hear that Bridget was marvellously free from the ordinary faults and passions of child-

hood, never known to be either disobedient, envious, or unkind to any one.

When she was ten years of age she heard a sermon upon the Passion of Christ, and it made so deep an impression upon her mind, that she could turn it to no other subject. The night following, it seemed to her that she saw our Divine Lord hanging on His Cross covered with wounds from which the blood streamed down, while His voice said to her: "Look upon me, My daughter."

"Alas! my Lord," answered Bridget, "who have thus treated Thee?"

And with an expression of unutterable sorrow the Saviour said: "They who despise Me and are insensible to My love for them."

We may well understand that the little girl of ten years never forgot this vision, never forgot the voice of love, the look of woe; and from that time Bridget could scarce think of what had happened without shedding tears.

At sixteen years of age her father gave her in marriage to Ulpho of Sweden, who was but

two years her senior; and having enrolled themselves in the Third Order of S. Francis, this pious young couple lived in their dwelling with the order and regularity they might have observed in a monastery. Eight children were born to them, and then the husband and wife vowed themselves wholly to God, and renouncing worldly position, used their goods for the poor, and built a hospital for the sick, whom they constantly waited upon. They then together went on pilgrimage to Compostella, but on their return Ulpho became ill at Arras. In answer to the prayer of Bridget he was however restored to perfect health, though this did not long continue, and arriving in Sweden he died in the Cistercian Monastery of Aloastre.

His holy widow now lived more closely in the penitential way she had long desired; dividing her husband's estates among her children she forgot the world, and covering her head with a veil and girding herself with a knotted cord, she redoubled her austerities

and pious exercises. The great monastery of Wastein was built by her, and in it she placed sixty nuns. There was a separate enclosure for friars, thirteen of whom were priests, four deacons, and eight lay-brothers, and she prescribed for them the rule of S. Augustine, with certain constitutions which are supposed to have been specially dictated to her by Christ in a vision, although this is not set forth as fact in the bull of her canonisation. When S. Bridget had herself spent two years in the monastery, she went on a pilgrimage to Rome to pray at the tomb of the Apostles. She visited the churches and hospitals, and was soon reputed as a Saint by those who witnessed her devotion, her penitential life, and also her deep humility.

During the last thirty years of her life the Saint went every day to confession, communicating several days in the week, and this use of the Sacraments brought continual supplies of grace to a soul already greatly favoured by God.

The revelations accorded to S. Bridget were both numerous and wonderful, and many were written at her dictation by a Swedish Cistercian monk, who was her confessor, and accompanied her in her journeys and pilgrimages. This book was examined by order of a council and approved of as very profitable for the use of Catholics, though the assent of faith in them is not required. The most beautiful thought in connection with these visions is that Bridget always submitted her judgment concerning them with perfect simplicity ; nor did she ever esteem herself more highly because the Almighty treated her with such special goodness.

The intense love which this Saint felt towards Our Lord, caused her to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where—tracing His footsteps and musing on His sufferings—she shed floods of tears. Returning again to Rome, she dwelt there one year ; but it was a time of great physical suffering, and as she felt her end approach she summoned her daughter

Catherine and her son Birger to receive her last instructions.

Then, lying on sackcloth, the last Sacraments were administered to her, and the holy Bridget expired happily on the 23rd July, 1373, being seventy-one years old.

Her body was interred in the church of S. Lawrence in Panis-Perna, but a year later it was translated to her monastery in Sweden by the wish of her surviving children.



SS. Elzear and Delphina.

A.D. 1323.

SELZEAR was born in his father's ancestral castle, at Ansois, in the year 1295, and his mother's first act, as she held her little son in her arms, was to entreat God to bless him, and to grant that he might die in his infancy rather than live to offend his Maker. With holy parents to watch over his early years, to pray for him and to keep him pure and innocent, we find that Elzear was a pious and holy child, and so eager to bestow alms on the poor, that his nurses and governesses were obliged to have money and bread always at hand for the relief

of those who asked him. William of Sabran, his uncle, was Abbot of S. Victor's, at Marseilles, and under his care Elzear was educated, when of sufficient age to leave his mother and begin a course of study. Though so young, he began to use great austerities, wearing a knotted cord which galled his flesh, for which the Abbot sometimes reproved him.

When Elzear was ten years old, Charles II. of Sicily caused him to be affianced to Delphina of Glandeves, who was twelve years of age, and three years later the marriage was solemnised. But this youthful bride and bridegroom resolved to live as brother and sister, consecrating themselves to God, and giving themselves wholly to Him as if they had embraced a religious life.

At the age of twenty-three, Elzear inherited the wealth of his parents, who had both been removed by death; but he felt that he was the steward of the Lord, and that all he possessed must be used for the relief of the poor and distressed, and the advancement of

religion. Every day he was accustomed to recite the Divine Office, and almost daily did he receive Holy Communion with the greatest devotion, striving to become more and more conformed to the likeness of that Divine Master Who condescended to be his guest. "I do not think a man can enjoy in this life any pleasure equal to that which I feel in the Holy Communion," he would say to Delphina; and God favoured him with many spiritual consolations, with frequent raptures, and an habitual union with Himself, which he never lost, while occupied in necessary business. Whole nights would Elzear pass in prayer, but it was this constant waiting upon God which made him so wise in the government of his affairs, so faithful in every duty pertaining to his state of life.

He drew up a code of excellent rules for the observance of his household, which we cannot here give at length, but which were calculated to promote habits of piety in those who were round him. In them, he requires

that no one shall neglect to hear Mass daily, to confess each week, and communicate at the chief festivals. But though he insisted on a due time spent in prayer, he did not permit a neglect of business, for he says : "Away with those who are perpetually in the church to avoid the business of their employment. This they do, not because they have contemplation, but because they desire to have their work done for them. The life of the pious woman as described by the Holy Ghost, is not only to pray well, but also to be modest and obedient, to ply her work diligently and to take good care of the household. The ladies shall pray and read in the mornings, but shall spend the afternoons at some work." And then this servant of God goes on to say : "Whoever will well serve God, he shall be dear to me ; but I will never endure him who declares himself an enemy of God."

While thus piously advising and commanding his household, S. Elzear was careful to give personal example in every point required of

others ; and Delphina agreed in all his views, and strove like him to advance continually in the service of God. Among her servants she was as a mother with her children, while they looked up to her as a Saint.

M. S. Elzear went daily to the hospitals, and especially to those of lepers ; every morning he washed the feet of twelve poor men, and waited with his own hands upon those who came to his gate to be fed. One day he was asked the reason of his excessive love for beggars. "Because the bosom of the poor is the treasury of Jesus Christ," he replied.

Having to go into the kingdom of Naples to take possession of his estates there, many revolted against the Saint, despising him for his meekness, and refusing to acknowledge him, but he refused to overcome them in any other way than by patience and meekness. When remonstrated with, and advised to employ force, he said : "If I receive any affront or feel any movement of impatience arising in my breast, I turn all my thoughts

to Jesus Crucified, saying to myself: "Can what I suffer bear any comparison with what Jesus Christ was pleased to undergo for me?"

While compelled to remain some time in Italy, Elzear wrote thus to Delphina: "You desire to hear often of me. Go often to visit our amiable Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament, enter in spirit His Sacred Heart. You know that to be my constant dwelling, and you will always find me there."

Not long after his return to Ansois, S. Elzear, and also S. Delphina, having received the Holy Eucharist, publicly made that vow of perpetual chastity which had been so long made by Delphina to God in secret, and by His grace so faithfully kept, and as faithfully by Elzear, even without vow.

The honour of knighthood was conferred upon Elzear; he being called to Italy to receive it, and then King Robert made him governor to his son Charles, the Duke of Calabria, who under such care became a pious and virtuous prince.

Being sent as ambassador to Paris, when the hand of Mary of Valois was asked in marriage by the young Duke, S. Elzear then became seriously ill. He had already made a will, bequeathing certain properties to Delphina, to his brother, and many convents and hospitals; therefore he had no worldly cares to interrupt him in his preparations for death.

Upon the occasion of making his public vow of chastity three years before this fatal sickness, Elzear had been enrolled in the Third Order of S. Francis, so he made a general confession to the provincial of the Franciscans, and made confession daily during his illness. Many tears did this Saint shed for his offences against God, and yet his confessors have said that he had never committed a mortal sin. When Holy Viaticum was given him, he exclaimed: "This is my hope, in this I desire to die;" and on the 23rd September, 1323, his pure soul passed gently away, he being in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

The body of S. Elzear was placed in the Church of the Franciscan Friars, at Apt.

S. Delphina lived for many years in the practice of prayer and penance, and in ardent charity, and dying at seventy - six years of age, was buried in the same tomb where the remains of her husband had been laid so long.



S. Hyacinth, O.S.B.

A.D. 1256.

SHYACINTH was born in the year 1185, in the castle of Saxony, in Silesia, and was fortunate in possessing parents who carefully watched over his childhood, and implanted those Christian principles which preserved him pure and innocent in the time when temptations came to him.

After studying at Cracow, Prague, and Bologna, Hyacinth took the degree of doctor, and returning to the Bishop of Cracow, was made prebendary of his cathedral, and assistant in many of the affairs of the diocese.

Much as Hyacinth was occupied, he gave his chief time to prayer and the visiting and relief of the sick ; and all the money he received from the cathedral was given in alms to the poor.

In the year 1218, Yvo had succeeded to the bishopric, and being about to visit Rome took with him his nephew Hyacinth, and it was there they met with S. Dominic, and became eye-witnesses of the sanctity of his life and the many miracles he wrought by the power of God. It was thus that S. Hyacinth as well as his brother Ceslas received the Dominican habit in the Convent of S. Sabina, in the March of 1218, and by a special dispensation were allowed to make their solemn vows at the end of only a six months' novitiate.

Hyacinth was then appointed Superior of the mission in Poland, receiving every proof of respect and affection as in the company of his uncle Yvo he travelled through Austria, Moravia, and Silesia.

Arriving at Cracow, the first sermons

preached by S. Hyacinth were most successful in converting many to God, and in inducing careless Christians to a more fervent spirit of prayer and charity, and a frequent use of the sacraments. The eloquence of Hyacinth would however have availed but little had it not been accompanied by many proofs of his own sanctity of life, and his wonderful spirit of prayer; the miracles wrought by him also made great impression on the hearts of men, although the Saint tried to conceal them, from humility.

We hear that once when he came with three companions to the banks of the Vistula, desiring to cross over to Wisgrade, where S. Hyacinth was about to preach, the current was so strong that the boatmen refused to venture. Upon this the Saint made the sign of the Cross above the rapid river, and stepping boldly on it, walked across as swiftly and as easily as if it had been dry land. This was seen by the multitude awaiting him on the opposite bank, who listened reverently to

the teaching of one whom God favoured so highly.

When Hyacinth had preached in the chief cities of Poland, he undertook to carry the Gospel to the North, for he was penetrated with that missionary zeal which has ever distinguished the true sons of S. Dominic. However difficult and even dangerous the journey, it seemed to the Saint a labour of love, because it was all for God. Many were the religious houses of his Order which he founded, and then passing on to fresh efforts left his disciples to sustain and perfect that which had been begun.

During these journeys through barbarous nations, exposed to so many hardships, we might expect that the Saint would not see it necessary to add voluntary austerities to those which came to him in the course of his work, and yet we find that he never dispensed himself from the perpetual abstinence of his rule, and that on all Fridays and vigils he would take no other food than a little bread and water.

At Kiow—then the capital of both Russias—Hyacinth founded a large convent, and was successful in converting so many to the Christian faith, that a spirit of persecution began to animate those who were not Catholics, that they tried to terrify the converts by threats. But God took the punishment of His enemies into His own hands, for the Tartars came and besieged Kiow, and setting fire to it reduced it to ashes. During this time of horror S. Hyacinth passed through the streets already partly in flames and streaming with the blood of the slain, and carrying the Ciborium in one hand, and in the other the image of the Blessed Virgin, passed safely over the river Dnieper.

Being once more at Cracow, he continued for two years in the Convent of the Holy Trinity, still preaching in the town and the surrounding country. He next set forth on a visitation of all his convents among the Danes, Swedes, Prussians, and the Muscovites, and went to preach to the Tartars also, afterwards penetrating Cumania, which was long

considered as the most barbarous of all infidel nations.

In the year 1257, the Saint returned to Cracow after a journey of some four thousand leagues. He was now seventy-two years of age, and God's purpose was soon to summon him to his rest. It was then that a young nobleman was accidentally drowned in crossing the river on his return from asking Hyacinth to come and preach to his vassals. His mother had the corpse laid at the feet of the Saint whom she implored to pity her distress; he then prayed fervently to God, and taking the young man by the hand restored him to life.

Upon the 14th of August in that year, it was revealed to Hyacinth that he should be released from the body upon the coming day—the Assumption of Our Lady. This news gave him great joy, and calling his brethren round him, he begged them to live in charity and humility of heart, and to esteem poverty as a priceless treasure.

Upon the morning of the Festival the Saint assisted at Matins and at the Holy Sacrifice, and kneeling on the altar steps received the Body and Blood of Christ.

A few hours later he died in perfect peace, having reached the age of seventy-four years. S. Hyacinth was canonised by Pope Clement VIII. in the year 1594; some of his relics are preserved in a chapel built at Cracow in his honour, but some are enshrined in the church of the Dominicans at Paris, where they were deposited by Anne of Austria, who had obtained them from Ladislaus, King of Poland.



S. Bonaventura.

A.D. 1274.

HIS sainted Cardinal, Bishop, and Doctor of the Church, was born in Tuscany, during the year 1221, being given in baptism the name of John. At four years old the child became so ill that his life was despaired of, to the great distress of his pious mother, who going to Umbria knelt at the feet of S. Francis of Assisi, begging him to ask of God the restoration of her little son. The Saint was moved to pity at the sight of the mother's grief, and praying to God obtained for her what she desired, so that the child became

stronger than ever he had been before. It was also permitted S. Francis to foresee the future holiness of this little boy, so that he cried out, "O, buona ventura!" And afterwards the child was known by the name of Bonaventura, rather than John. In token of her gratitude the happy mother vowed her son to God, and redoubled her care of him, so that he should learn nothing but good, and become familiar even in his childish days with the practice of virtue.

In 1243, having reached the age of twenty-two years, Bonaventura received the habit of S. Francis, and was soon after sent to Paris to complete his studies. He became proficient in the philosophy of the schools, but referring all his studies to the glory of God, he did not become absorbed in them to the neglect of prayer and meditation.

One day S. Thomas Aquinas paid a visit to the Saint, and during their conversation asked him in what books he had learned sacred science. Bonaventura pointed to his crucifix.

“There,” said he, “is the source of my knowledge. I study only Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”

Though the austerities of S. Bonaventura were great and constant, his face always looked cheerful, for he possessed that peace of soul which cannot be shaken by exterior things. Much did he love the service of the sick, choosing to help those whose disorders were the most contagious or loathsome, so that he incurred considerable risk of his own life.

But while the virtues of S. Bonaventura shone like a bright light which could not be hidden, his own eyes discerned nothing but his many sins and imperfections, for in his humility he deemed himself unworthy of any of God’s favours, and many were the tears he shed over his state. Sometimes he would absent himself from Holy Communion, though he most ardently longed to receive his Lord, because he deemed himself unworthy of so great a joy. On one occasion, when he

was hearing Mass and meditating upon the Passion, Our Lord sent an angel to put within his lips part of the consecrated Host taken from the priest's hand, and ever afterwards he felt encouraged to communicate according to his desire.

When S. Bonaventura prepared to be ordained a priest he began to add to his prayers, his fastings and vigils, that so he might be more fitted for such an office, and afterwards he devoted himself to the salvation of souls with great zeal. In 1256 S. Thomas and S. Bonaventura were invited to take the Doctor's cap, but the humility of both was such that it was with difficulty arranged which should take precedence in receiving it.

S. Louis of France felt a deep affection for S. Bonaventura, and begged him to compile an Office of the Passion of Christ for his special use. His book on "The Government of the Soul," and his "Meditations," were written at the request of certain devout persons at the court.

In 1256, Bonaventura was chosen General of his Order, though but thirty-five years of age, and when the news of the appointment reached him, he shed many tears, and prostrate on the ground begged the light of the Holy Ghost to direct him. At that time the Franciscan Order was troubled by dissensions; some of the friars desiring a stricter rule, while others as strongly counselled mitigations; but when S. Bonaventura came to Rome he contrived to restore union amongst them. Just at this time a book was written inveighing against the Mendicant Orders in the Church, but Bonaventura replied to it in a work entitled "The Poverty of Our Lord Jesus Christ," and gained a complete victory.

In the year 1260 the Saint assembled a general Chapter at Narbonne, giving a new form to the old Constitutions, and adding some rules, reduced them altogether into twelve chapters. It was at the request of the assembled friars that Bonaventura undertook to write the life of S. Francis. On leaving

Narbonne he went to be present at the dedication of a church at Mount Alverno, and while in Italy he visited the little oratory where the Great Saint of his Order had received the Stigmata, and other spots of interest connected with him, thus preparing to write the life more fully, and to set forth in it the spirit of S. Francis. It was while S. Bonaventura was employed on this work, that S. Thomas found him in his cell in a state of ecstasy, raised above the ground; quietly retiring, he exclaimed: "Let us leave a Saint to write for a Saint."

It was at a Chapter held at Assisi that Bonaventura ordered the Angelic Salutation to be recited at six o'clock every evening. In 1276 the Saint left Italy for Paris, where he wrote a work called "A Pious Exposition of the Creation," and had but just finished it when he heard that he was nominated Cardinal, and an order had been given for his immediate appearance at Rome. Two Nuncios were sent forward to meet him, bearing the Cardinal's hat,

and they found the Saint resting at the Franciscan monastery some four leagues from Florence, busily employed in washing up dishes. Without leaving off his work he quietly begged them to hang the hat on a tree, as his hands were not in a condition to touch it, and then to walk in the garden until he had completed his task.

When Gregory X. assembled a general Council at Lyons, S. Bonaventura was present, and between the second and third sessions found leisure for preaching and for establishing a confraternity under the special patronage of the Blessed Virgin. During the fourth session, however, he was taken ill, so that he could no longer attend to business, and gave himself up to prayer in preparation for death. The Pope himself administered to him the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and on the 15th July, 1274, Bonaventura calmly and happily expired, being fifty-three years of age.

In 1494 the body of the Saint was translated to the Franciscan church at Lyons ; but

some of the bones are preserved in other churches. In 1628, Lyons was visited by plague, but when the relics of Bonaventura were carried out in procession the disorder began to abate, and soon disappeared altogether.

Many of the Saint's writings are preserved to us, in which we may see how the love of God penetrated his heart, and how great was his devotion to the Passion of Christ, nor can the story of his life be more fitly closed than by one of his devout prayers :

“ O Jesus, Who for my sake hast not pardoned Thyself, do Thou so impress upon me Thy Passion that wheresoever I turn, I may behold Thy Wounds, and find no repose but in Thee and in the contemplation of Thy sufferings.” Amen.



S. Thomas Aquinas.

A.D. 1274.

THE last words which this great Saint spoke to those around his bed, seem to give us the secret of his life of singular holiness and fidelity from its earliest commencement to its close: "Be assured that he who shall always walk faithfully in God's presence, always ready to give Him an account of all his actions, shall never be separated from Him by consenting to sin."

In that constant recollection had S. Thomas been dwelling from the day when, as a little child of five years, he was placed under the monks of Monte Cassino; and they saw with

surprise and joy that the impatience, anger, and other ordinary faults of children had no place in him, that God's grace seemed to fill his heart, and that his natural talent was even surpassed by his disposition towards piety and virtue.

Of illustrious family, his parents desired that he should prize nobility of birth far less than holiness of life, and thus they placed him with those who should best instil the love and knowledge of God into his heart.

When S. Thomas was ten years old, the Abbot of Monte Cassino advised his father to send him for further study to some university, but first of all the Count took him to stay awhile with his mother at their home near Loretto.

Here the boy was both the wonder and the admiration of the household, for though there was much company, and his life was so different to what he had been accustomed, he seemed as recollected as if he were still dwelling in the monastery, speaking as little as

possible, and spending his time in prayer or serious reading. It was his happiness too to seek out the poor and needy, and give them help ; for this purpose he distributed his own meals among the hungry, until his father heard of it and allowed him to dispense alms at the gate to all who applied for aid, which permission caused Thomas the greatest joy. The Countess, seeing how pure and innocent was the mind of her little son, feared the risk of placing him in a college lest he might be led astray by evil influence, but her husband was resolved on sending him to Naples, where a university had lately been opened. In the midst of danger this holy child seems to have kept himself spotless, shunning all whom he perceived were not virtuous, and praying earnestly to God to preserve him from evil. As he grew up towards manhood, he shunned those amusements which so frequently harm the soul, and spent his leisure in the quiet of his chamber, praying and meditating on holy things. His chief

friend was a very holy priest of the Order of S. Dominic, and his words so inflamed the heart of S. Thomas with an increasing love of God, that he conceived a desire to give himself wholly to the Divine service in that Order.

When the Count, his father, was told of this desire, he refused to agree to it, but the Saint being assured that it was God's call, knew that it must be obeyed, even before the voice of an earthly parent, and therefore at his earnest entreaty he received the Dominican habit at Naples, in 1243, when he was about seventeen years old.

The Countess Theodora sent a messenger to urge him to give up such a state of life, and set out to visit him for the same purpose, whereupon S. Thomas begged his Superiors to remove him. They did so, sending him first to Rome, and afterwards to Paris ; but two of his brothers who were commanders in the enemy's guard, seized him on the road near Acqua-pendente, and after striving vainly

to pull off his habit, took him to Rocca-Secca, the seat of his father. The Countess now used persuasions and tears to turn her son from his desire for the life of a religious, but he remained firm and unshaken, so that growing angry, she ordered him to be closely confined, and allowed him to see no one but his two sisters.

This solitude was very welcome to the Saint, for it gave him time for prayer; but it was interrupted by the arrival of his brothers, who shut him up in a tower of the castle, tore his habit into shreds, and even sent a wicked person to him to try and tempt him to sin. Snatching up a burning brand from the fire, S. Thomas drove this creature from his presence, and then kneeling in prayer thanked God for helping him, and begged grace ever to remain faithful to his vow of entire purity and self-consecration. It was then that, falling into a sleep, he was visited by two angels, who seemed to gird him so tightly round the waist with a cord that the pressure awoke

him ; but this favour from Heaven he carefully concealed for some thirty years, and then in telling it to his confessor, added that from that time he had never felt tempted by any impure thought or imagination.

For a year or more, S. Thomas suffered this cruelty at the hands of his friends, and then they began to relent, seeing his great patience.

The Dominicans of Naples being told that his mother was willing to help her holy son to escape, went to Rocca-Secca, where Thomas was let down from the tower in a strong basket, and so accompanied them back to his brethren, who received him joyfully.

A year from this time he made his profession there ; but his mother renewed her complaints to Pope Innocent IV., and he sent for S. Thomas, in order to examine him as to whether his was a true vocation, and finding every sign that God had called him to His immediate service, the disputed question was set at rest by the Pope's entire approbation.

S. Thomas now went from Rome to Paris,

and afterwards to Cologne, where he continued his studies, but so concealing his progress and his talents, through motives of humility, that his companions mockingly called him "the dumb ox." However, his brilliant powers of intellect could not long remain undiscovered, especially by his masters; but applause and admiration had no ill effect upon S. Thomas, who was already so well-grounded in the virtue of humility. One day when it was his business to read at table, the corrector by mistake told him to read a word wrongly, and S. Thomas obeyed, though he was aware of the error. When others spoke of it, and said he had been foolish to admit the correction, the Saint answered: "It matters not how a word is pronounced, but to practise on all occasions humility and obedience is of the greatest importance."

In the year 1248, S. Thomas was appointed to teach at Cologne, and he then commenced publishing his first work. It was then, also, that he began with increased prayer and holy mor-

tification to prepare himself for the priesthood.

The devotion of S. Thomas to the Blessed Sacrament was of no ordinary kind; long did he kneel before it in the day, long hours also were given in prayer in that Divine Presence during the hours of the night, and the love there enkindled shone in his every look and word.

In October, 1257, the Saint was made Doctor of Divinity, and a year later was called upon to give his judgment in a question of great importance, about which the opinion of the professors of the Paris University was divided. Before giving utterance to any decision, the young doctor applied himself to prayer, and then writing his treatise carried it to the church, and laying it upon the altar offered it thus to God.

S. Louis, the holy King of France, had a deep respect for S. Thomas, and frequently sought his counsel even in matters concerning the state.

In 1261, Pope Urban IV. summoned the Saint to Rome, where he taught and preached as he also did in Naples, Bologna, Viterbo, and many other cities. There were two Rabbins of the Jewish Church who had held a lengthy conference with S. Thomas, and remained obstinate in their unbelief, but agreed to resume the discussion upon the coming day.

After leaving them, the Saint repaired to the foot of the altar, and there prayed during the entire night for their conversion; and in the morning the Rabbins sought him, begging to be baptised Christians, while many others followed their example.

In the year 1263, the general chapter of the Doninicans was held in London, and S. Thomas being present, soon afterwards obtained permission to relinquish his teaching, and thus be more able to live a retired life. Many ecclesiastical preferments were offered him, but never could he be prevailed to accept of any.

For several months before his death, S. Thomas laid aside his writings and fixed his whole mind on God, and thoughts of the life to come.

A general council had been convoked by Pope Gregory X., and having been directed to repair to it the Saint set out for Naples, though very much out of health.

This was at the close of the month of January, in 1274, and he had for his companion his friend Father Reynold of Piperno. On his way S. Thomas rested at the Castle of Magenza, the residence of his niece; but here his illness increased, and he felt sure that his end was not far distant.

However, this conviction in nowise hindered him from continuing his journey until an increase of fever compelled him to stop at the Cistercian Abbey of Fossa-Nuova. Here, he went at once before the Blessed Sacrament, and began to pray with great fervour; and passing thence into the cloister he was lodged in the Abbot's cell, and lay there for nearly a month.

During his illness he was continually speaking of eternity and his longing for God's presence, saying in the words of Augustine: "Then shall I truly live, when I shall be quite filled with Thee and Thy love. Now am I a burden to myself, because I am not entirely filled with Thee."

Having made a general confession of his whole life to Father Reynold, he asked for Viaticum, and while awaiting it begged to be laid on the floor upon ashes. When he saw the Sacred Host in the hand of the priest, he made aloud a profession of faith in the Real Presence, and all other tenets of the Roman Church; then, with loving adoration, received his Lord, and remained on the ashes while making his thanksgiving.

As he grew rapidly weaker, he now received Extreme Unction, and after thanking the Abbot and monks of Fossa-Nuova for their charity to him, he began to pray, and a little after midnight, it being the 7th of March, 1274, he departed this life, being then forty-

eight years of age. A vast concourse of people assembled at the funeral of the Saint, and several persons were cured by his intercession, and by his relics. Many universities, princes, and religious Orders, begged to have the remains of S. Thomas entrusted to their keeping, and at length Pope Urban V. decided that it should be given to the Dominicans, to carry to Paris or to Toulouse. They decided on removing it to the last-named city, where it rests in a rich shrine in the Dominican church there.

The Saint was solemnly canonised in the year 1323, and in 1567 Pope Pius V. decreed that his festival should be kept with the same honour paid to the festivals of the four doctors of the Western Church. One very beautiful story is told of the desire of S. Thomas for God, and God alone. At Naples, while busied with the writing which made his name so eminent, he was seen one day raised from the ground in ecstasy while he prayed, and a voice from the crucifix said to him: "Thomas, thou hast

well written of Me; what recompense dost thou desire?"

The Saint answered: "No other than Thyself, O Lord."

The hymn of S. Thomas Aquinas is well-known to all of us, "Adoro te devoto," breathing the spirit of faith and love in the Blessed Sacrament; that "thirst" after Jesus was satisfied indeed, when the Saint entered into the unspeakable glory of heaven, and it was his happiness to see his Lord, no longer veiled under the appearance of bread and wine, but radiant and beautiful as the light of the celestial city, which—because He is there—"hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon to shine in it."

* * * * *

"Jesus! whom for the present veil'd I see
What I so thirst for, oh vouchsafe to me
That I may see Thy countenance unfolding,
And may be blest Thy glory in beholding."



S. Casimir.

A.D. 1433.

THERE have been many Saints who have valued the love and grace of God above earthly rank and earthly possessions, and who in the midst of the temptations which necessarily attend power and influence, have learned to die to themselves; and among those blessed servants of Christ is Casimir, Prince of Poland.

He was one of a large family of children born to Casimir III., King of Poland, and his wife Elizabeth of Austria, and was of a pious and devout nature, even from infancy. Happily this young prince was placed under the

care of a holy tutor, a Canon of Cracow, whose life and teaching excited within his pupils an earnest desire to attain perfection in the service of God. It was thus that Casimir began, even in boyhood, to practise penance, for he realised that the ease and luxury of life in a royal court ill-prepared the soul to receive God's grace, and to triumph over the temptations of an evil nature and an evil world. So he chose the plainest clothing, and wore beneath it a hair-shirt, while he took his rest on the ground and spent many hours of the night in prayer and meditation, and would even go out and wait in the cold and darkness until the church-doors were opened ; and entering, would assist at Matins and Holy Mass.

The Passion of Our Lord was perhaps the chief devotion of S. Casimir, and as he mused upon those terrible sufferings borne for love of sinners, tears would stream from his eyes, and earnestly he would pray for an abiding spirit of contrition and of love. The devotion of

Casimir to the Blessed Virgin is shown in the hymn which bears his name, and is so familiar to all of us, a copy of which was by his express desire buried with him.

When the Saint was about fifteen years of age, the Hungarians desired to have him for their king, and some of the nobles came to the King of Poland, asking his consent.

Casimir was most unwilling to be placed in this position, but yielding to the will of his father went to the frontiers at the head of an army; but hearing that the ruling monarch, aware of the disaffection of his nobles, had raised a force to defend himself, the young prince gave up the project, obtaining his father's consent by reason of the recommendation of the Pope. But though the King of Poland had thus relinquished his plan for the establishment of his son upon the throne of Hungary, he was ill-pleased about the matter, so that Casimir deemed it wiser to retire quietly to the Castle of Dobzki, some three miles removed from Cracow.

There for three months he dwelt, devoting his time to prayer and penance, and afterwards returned to his father, but could never again be induced to take any steps to secure the crown which was repeatedly offered him.

For twelve years the life of Prince Casimir was passed in the practice of piety and virtue, and then consumption made him its prey, and slowly and painfully he drew near to death. Being permitted to foretell his last hour, the Saint began a careful preparation by renewed prayer and the reception of the Sacraments of the Church, and expired in great peace upon the 4th of March, 1482, being in his twenty-fourth year.

He was interred in the Church of S. Stanislaus; and so many were the miracles wrought at his intercession, that the accounts fill a volume. During the process of canonisation the tomb of S. Casimir was opened and his body was found quite incorrupt, and emitting a sweet fragrance, though it had been buried one hundred and twenty years.

This Saint is not only considered the special patron of Poland, but of all the young who aspire to that purity which distinguished his brief life.



S. Bernardin of Sienna.

A.D. 1444.

THIS Saint, one of the sons of the great S. Francis, and the instrument of so much good to the souls of men, was born in 1380. At three years of age he lost his mother, and his father died before he was seven, so that the care of Bernardin in his childhood devolved upon his aunt, who strove to impart some of that ardent love to God and His Blessed Mother which filled her own heart.

The boy grew up modest, humble, and pious, loving, as his chief pleasure, to visit the churches, or to serve Holy Mass, and paying

much attention to sermons, which he would repeat afterwards to his young companions.

Bernardin dearly loved the poor, nor could he bear to see any one unhelped. One day, when his aunt refused bread to a beggar at the door, having in the house but one loaf for their own use, Bernardin said, "For the love of God let this poor man have some, otherwise I will neither dine nor sup to-day. I had rather that the poor should have food than myself."

Even in childhood Bernardin was in the habit of fasting on Saturdays in honour of the Blessed Virgin, a custom he ever afterwards maintained. At the age of eleven the boy was sent to a school at Sienna, taught by the best masters; and here he distinguished himself in studies, but still more by the piety and simplicity of his life. So abhorrent to him was the slightest impurity, that those who were unlike himself dared not speak unrestrainedly in his presence, but would whisper: "Hush, here comes Bernardin."

At seventeen years of age the holy youth enrolled himself in the confraternity of Our Lady to serve the sick in the hospital of La Scala, and during his life here he practised many austerities, although he applied himself still more to the interior mortification of the will, and thus became increasingly mild and patient in his dealings with others. For four years Bernardin had served this hospital, when a terrible plague broke out in Italy, and was brought to Sienna by pilgrims to the Jubilee. So many were the sufferers that Bernardin persuaded twelve young men to come to his help, for the whole care of the hospital had been left to him.

With what sweetness and patience he ministered to the sick, how unweariedly he strove to heal them, we can but faintly imagine; nor did God permit contagion to pass to him. But when he was able to return home, a fever attacked him consequent upon his great fatigue, and for some months he was confined to his bed, edifying others by his complete

resignation to God's Will as he had before edified them by his zeal and charity.

Some time after his recovery Bernardin retired to a house removed but a short distance from the city, and there alone, and with prayer and fasting, besought the Almighty to make his future state of life plain to him, as accorded with His Holy Will. It was then that he decided to take the habit of S. Francis among the Fathers of the Strict Observance at Colombière, and there he made his novitiate, and was professed on the 8th September, 1404. That love for the Blessed Mary which had distinguished the childhood of Bernardin, caused him to select her feasts for the principal actions of his life; and having been born on the Feast of her Nativity, he took the habit on that day, and also made it the date of his first Mass, and his first sermon.

So far had the Saint advanced in the way of humiliation, that he felt pleased when any one scorned him. Passing through the streets, in a threadbare habit, the boys would laugh and

cry out after him, but in this and in far greater insults he found occasion for rejoicing. Hard is it to learn this degree of humility, to human nature *impossible*; but Bernardin had taken for his teacher Christ Crucified—One Who chose to be “despised and rejected of men.” On one occasion, when he was lying prostrate at the foot of the crucifix, a voice spoke to him saying, “My son, behold Me as I hang on the Cross! If thou lovest Me, if thou dost indeed desire to imitate Me, be thou also fastened naked to thy cross, and follow Me; thus thou wilt assuredly find Me.”

At length Bernardin was desired by his superiors to preach to others, and he became a powerful instrument of good, melting the most hardened and obdurate sinners to tears of repentance for their offences against a God of such infinite love. Being asked how he managed to preach so profitably, Bernardin gave this rule :

“In all your actions seek first the kingdom of God and His glory, and direct all

you do purely to His honour. Thus the Holy Ghost will be your Master, and will give you both wisdom and words so that no adversary will be able to stand against you."

When Bernardin was preaching once at Milan, the proud Duke Philip was annoyed by some of his utterances, and threatened him with death should they be repeated; but the Saint declared that no greater joy could befall him than to give up life for God's truth. Then the Duke sent him one hundred ducats in a golden bowl, seeking to bribe him, but Bernardin excused himself from receiving the gift. A second messenger came, and yet he refused; but when the third arrived he took the money and went to the prisons where he used it to release debtors confined there. When Duke Philip heard this his anger was turned to admiration for one who so truly set at naught the riches of this world. Although S. Bernardin loved humility above every other virtue, it was God's Will to honour him even in the sight of men, for he received power to

work many miraculous cures, and raised four dead persons to life.

In the year 1438 he was made Vicar-General of his Order of Strict Observance in Italy; but in five years was permitted to resign that post and to spend his time in preaching through Roumania and Lombardy.

Returning to Sienna in 1444, he was taken ill with a malignant fever, and began to make his preparation for death. When he was quite speechless he made a sign to be moved from his bed and placed on the floor, where he died, having lived to serve and glorify God until the age of nearly sixty-four years. Many miracles were worked at the tomb of the holy Bernardin; and he was canonised by Nicholas V. in 1450. His relics are in the church of his Order at Aquila.



S. Nicholas Tolentini.

A.D. 1305.

THE father and mother of this Saint were poor but pious people, who had been many years without children.

Desiring very much to have a son, Amata, with her husband's approval, made a vow to go on pilgrimage to the tomb of S. Nicholas, at Myra, and there ask God to give her this great blessing ; nor was her petition made in vain, for in due time the child was born to them, and received the name of Nicholas. From early childhood the little boy showed a strong desire to become a priest, and at eleven years old he entered a house of the Augus-

tinian Order, at Tolentino, and there remained until he made his profession.

It seemed that God called His young servant to extraordinary austerity of life, and inspired by Him, Nicholas at fifteen years of age wore sackcloth, and a girdle of iron round his waist, nor did he ever eat either fish, milk, or eggs; while four days in each week he deprived himself altogether of food. One of his relatives, Superior of another monastery, reasoned with him on the matter of such great mortification of body, arguing that he would thus shorten his life, and lessen his power of serving God; he also asked him to come to his own community. Nicholas heard all that his friend had to say, and then addressed himself to God. As he prayed, he saw angels in the form of little children, who, clad in robes of pure and dazzling white, ascended the altar steps chanting, "At Tolentino be thy stay;" and by this he understood that it was the Divine Will for him to remain in the Order he had chosen.

Being sent to the house at Cingola, Nicholas was there ordained priest; and with such fervour and visible devotion did he daily offer the Adorable Sacrifice, that people strove to be present, believing that he was indeed one of the Saints of God. The last thirty years of his life were spent at Tolentino, where the holy Nicholas was most zealous in working to save souls, preaching almost daily, and with an earnestness which brought tears from the eyes of his hearers. While God sent many heavenly favours to His servant, He permitted him to be severely tried and molested by the Evil One, who, in the form of some wild bird or animal, would disturb his brief rest. Once, under the guise of a bat, this enemy of souls dashed through the window while the Saint prayed, and extinguishing the candle, left him in darkness. But Nicholas rose from his knees, and blowing upon the wick rekindled the flame, and thus was able to resume his interrupted devotions.

The austerities to which S. Nicholas had

so long subjected himself, so exhausted his frame that he became very ill, and was commanded by his Superior to take some meat. Accordingly a partridge was prepared and placed before him, but the fear of enjoying it filled the heart of Nicholas as if he were about to commit a sin, and with tears he begged to be excused from partaking of it. His Superior seeing his distress consented, whereupon Nicholas made the sign of the Cross over the dish whereon the bird lay, and immediately life returned to it, and it fluttered away.

A year before the death of this Saint, a star shone over the little village of S. Angelo, where he was born, and from that time it accompanied him wherever he went, and after his death reappeared on each anniversary.

Not until he was seventy years old did Nicholas Tolentini pass away, having lived a most pure and holy life. In art this blameless innocence is figured by the white lily in his hand, while above his head a star is shining.

Upon the feast of S. Nicholas, in monasteries of the Augustinian friars, little loaves of bread are baked and distributed to those who are sick. This custom arises from an incident in the life of the Saint, when in an illness Our Blessed Lady appeared to him with S. Augustine and S. Monica beside her, and bade him send to a pious woman living near for some of the bread she had just taken from her oven. Nicholas obeyed, and eating the bread rose up perfectly cured.

The arms of this Saint, preserved at Tolentino, are said to bleed when great misfortune threatens the Church of Christ, it happened thus before the death of Pope Clement X., and at other times, a list of which is given in the Bollandists. Relics of S. Nicholas are preserved and venerated in many of the cities of Italy, and at Ghent and Antwerp there is some of his blood.



S. Peter of Luxemburg.

A.D. 1387.

GUY of Luxemburg, Count of Ligny, and his noble wife Mand, were dwelling at Ligny, a small town of Lorraine, when their son Peter was born to them in the year 1369.

At three years of age the child lost the care of his pious mother, but his aunt, the Countess of Orgières, well supplied her place, and superintended his education, choosing the most pious people as his instructors. Before he was seven years old, the little Peter had given himself wholly to God by vow, and had entered upon a life of continual prayer

and such mortification as suited his tender age.

At ten years old he was sent to Paris, to study, and while he was there news came that his father was dead, and that his eldest brother, Valeran, had been taken prisoner by the English, after a battle in Flanders, in which the French and Flemish were defeated.

When Peter heard that his brother had been sent to Calais in confinement, he at once travelled to London, yielding himself up as a hostage for Valeran until his ransom should be paid, which action so impressed the English King Richard II., that he gave him his liberty, receiving his word as sufficient pledge, and inviting him to his court. But Peter had no desire to mix with the favourites of royalty, and hastening back to Paris he resumed his interrupted studies and his retired and austere life.

For spiritual guidance this holy youth often resorted to a man of great learning and piety,

who—though taking no vows—lived in a religious house in Paris ; from him Peter received instruction in prayer and the practice of perfection.

In the year 1383, the Saint was made a canon, but this preferment inspired him only with sentiments of humility, and the desire to be more worthy of serving God in whatever way He should appoint.

Being made Bishop of Metz by Clement VII., he entered the city barefoot and riding on an ass, in imitation of Our Divine Lord Who thus entered the city of Jerusalem.

He divided his revenues into three parts, one being allotted to the Church, one to the poor, and the remaining third to the use of himself and his household.

Each day S. Peter went to confession, that so he might with less unworthiness receive the Body and Blood of Christ ; and he bewailed every small failing with tears such as few shed over their great sins.

In the year 1386, the Saint was created

Cardinal, under the title of S. George, and commanded to reside at Avignon, in attendance on the Pope, but here he still continued his former austerities.

When His Holiness begged him to mitigate these excessive rigours, S. Peter answered: "Holy Father, I shall always be an unprofitable servant, but I can at least obey;" and relinquishing some of his penances, he gave more liberal alms in place of them.

So thoroughly had the Saint made poverty his portion, that when he died his whole property was found to consist of twenty pence only.

In reward for his faithful service, God gave S. Peter many spiritual favours. Sometimes even while walking in the street he would fall into an ecstasy—and an old picture of him in this state is still preserved with these words beneath it, which he would often repeat:

"Contempt of the world; contempt of thyself; rejoice in thy own contempt, but despise no other person."

About ten months after the Saint had been created Cardinal, he fell into ill-health, and was advised to retire to the town of Villeneuve, on the other side of the Rhone.

During his last illness, the Saint confessed twice daily, and each day received the Holy Communion, while his close union with God seemed to be continually strengthening as his life drew towards its close.

To his sister, Jane of Luxemburg, he sent a small treatise containing some rules for a spiritual life, which he had drawn up expressly for her.

When he had received the last Sacraments, the Saint called his servants to his bedside, and begged their pardon for all he had ever done to offend them. He then asked them to promise to fulfil his last request, which they most readily engaged to do, little supposing he would draw from his pillow a discipline, and insist that each one should give him several blows in punishment for the faults he had committed in regard to them. In vain

did they protest, and entreat—S. Peter held them to their promise, and joyfully receiving their stripes began to pray silently to God, and as he prayed his soul departed. This happened upon the 2nd of June, in the year 1387, and he was buried without any pomp, according to his most urgent request, in the churchyard of S. Michael. But after he was laid there, so many miracles were wrought at the tomb, that the citizens of Avignon erected a rich chapel over it, and later the church and convent of the Celestines were raised on the spot, and the remains of the Saint enshrined there. The life of S. Peter of Luxemburg would scarcely be complete without speaking of that miracle which moved the people of Avignon to choose him for their special patron.

A child of some twelve years had fallen from a high tower of the palace of Avignon, and being dashed upon a sharp rock was killed on the spot.

The father was almost frantic at the sight,

and falling on his knees implored the intercession of S. Peter of Luxembourg; then gathering up the fractured pieces of the child's skull, put them with the lifeless body, in a sack, and laid it on the tomb of the Saint. The people joined the Celestine monks in fervent prayer, and after some little interval the child was restored to life and health, and was placed on the altar where all might behold the wonder God had worked by the intercession of His servant. As this miracle took place upon the 5th of July, the festival of S. Peter of Luxembourg has ever since been celebrated at Avignon upon that day.

child would answer that he only wanted to be a saint by the help of God's grace, and this seemed ever the end he had in view during his early years.

He was about nineteen when he saw a vision as of a virgin, around whom there shone celestial brightness, and who said to him : "Why seekest thou rest to thy mind out of thyself, sometimes in this object, sometimes in that? What thou desirest is to be found only with me; behold, it is in my hands. Seek it in me who am the wisdom of God. By taking me for thy spouse and thy portion thou shalt be possessed of an inestimable treasure." At that instant, S. Laurence found himself moved to a more entire giving of himself up to the love and knowledge of God; and feeling disposed to enter the religious state he asked counsel of a learned and holy Priest as to the Divine Will in his regard. This director advised him first to accustom himself gradually to austerities; and Laurence gladly obeyed, beginning by giving up his bed to lie on rough and

knotted sticks strewed on the floor. After a short time his mother and some of his friends grew alarmed lest he might injure his health, and therefore suggested that he could serve God also in the state of marriage. Their words served only to send Laurence in all haste to the Monastery of S. George, at Alga, begging to receive the religious habit, which request was granted him.

So thoroughly had he accustomed himself to bodily mortifications, that those which his rule enjoined were quite familiar to him, and to them he added others, until his superiors were obliged to put a limit to them. In the severest weather the Saint would never approach a fire, nor in time of excessive heat would he assuage his thirst by drinking between meals, for he was wont to say : " If we cannot endure this inconvenience, how shall we endure the sufferings of purgatory ?" While still a novice, he had to undergo the cutting and burning of some dangerous swellings which came in his neck ; but during the suf-

fering he never gave even a sigh, and only uttered the Name of Jesus.

It was one of the duties of this Saint to go out asking alms in the street; and for humiliation he would thrust himself into the greatest crowd, and especially among the nobility who would draw scornfully aside. "Let us go boldly in quest of scorn," he would say to his companion. "We have done nothing if we have renounced the world only in words. Let us triumph over it to-day with our sacks and crosses."

Frequently would S. Laurence stand at the door of his mother's house, and cry: "An alms for God's sake;" whereupon the servants would come out to fill his wallet; but he never would take from them more than two loaves, and so depart, saying, "Peace be with you."

Once it happened that the storehouse of the community was burned down; but when Laurence heard a brother lamenting over the loss, he cried, "Why have we embraced and

vowed poverty? God has granted us this blessing that we may feel it."

Being made Superior of the community, it happened once during his term of office that he was rashly accused at chapter of some fault against the rule. Instead of justifying himself, as he well could have done, the Saint rose, and walking to the centre of the room, knelt down and asked pardon of the Fathers, which action so confused his accuser, that he threw himself at the feet of Laurence and condemned his own conduct.

When this holy servant of God was made a priest, he always shed tears when offering the Holy Sacrifice ; and not seldom did he become rapt in ecstasy to the wonder of all present.

In 1433, Pope Eugenius IV. nominated Laurence Justinian to the Episcopal See of Venice ; but though advanced to this dignity, he maintained the austerity he had practised in the cloister.

His household consisted but of five persons ; he would use only earthenware, and took his

rest on a bed of coarse straw with but a scanty covering. Every day the Bishop's house was besieged with persons asking alms, nor were any sent away unrelieved. But S. Laurence felt still more pity for those who, though in sore need, bear their trouble in silence, fearing to make it known ; so he found pious women to seek out such cases and relieve them in the most suitable way. After eighteen years as Bishop, S. Laurence was advanced to the dignity of Patriarch, although with tears he protested against it ; however, when his pleading proved useless, he felt that an increase of honour only bound him to an increase of zeal in the service of God, and the help of his fellow-creatures.

S. Laurence had just completed his work on "The Degrees of Perfection," when fever attacked him. Observing that his servants were preparing him for a softer couch than he had used in health, he cried, "Are you laying a feather-bed for me? No, that shall not be, for my Lord was stretched

on a hard and painful tree." Nothing would content him until he was placed on his bed of straw, and then, bidding his friends dry their tears, he began to ejaculate, "Good Jesus, behold I come. Behold the Spouse, let us go forth to meet Him," and other such short aspirations and loving affections. After receiving Extreme Unction, the Saint lived two days, during which people of all ranks came imploring his blessing.

It was the 8th January, 1455, when S. Laurence passed to his heavenly reward; but his festival is appointed for the 5th September, which is the day on which he was consecrated a Bishop.



S. John Capistran.

A.D. 1456.



THIS Saint was born in the city which gives him his name, in the year 1385. No detailed account of his childhood and early youth is given us; but we find him living at Perugia, where he had studied, and where he was universally beloved and respected by his fellow-citizens, one of the chief of whom gave his daughter to him in marriage.

In 1413 a violent quarrel was raging between the King of Naples and the city of Perugia, and S. John Capistran was employed in negotiating a peace; but some fancied he

was not trustworthy, and seizing him in the road when he was on a journey, imprisoned him in the castle of Bruffa, where he was loaded with chains and allowed no better nourishment than bread and water. During that time, and while he was reflecting on the inconstancy of the world's favour, his wife died, and S. John decided, after earnest prayer, to take the habit of the Order of S. Francis. He found means of making this desire known, but the Father-guardian refused to send him the habit while he was still a prisoner, so John cut his clothes into the shape of a religious garb, and his hair so that it might form a tonsure.

Soon after this he was set free, and selling his estate he paid his ransom, and gave what remained as alms to the poor, returning to Perugia, where he entered the Franciscan convent, being then about thirty years of age. In order more thoroughly to try his vocation and to kill all self-love, the Father-guardian made him ride upon an ass through

the streets of Perugia clad in a ridiculous dress, and having on his head a paper cap, upon which many grievous sins were written in large letters. Though this would seem to be a most painful penance to one who had been esteemed so highly in that very city, it did not cost this holy man any suffering, for already his spirit of humility was great, and in a short time passed in religion he seemed to have obtained a perfect victory over himself. From the time of making his religious vows he took but one small meal in the day, excepting when compelled to make very long and fatiguing journeys, and then he added a slight collation at night; and during the space of thirty-six years he never tasted meat excepting under obedience when he was seriously ill. But in S. John's extreme old age Pope Eugenius IV. forbade this strict abstinence, and he began to take a very little meat.

We hear that when S. John Capistran preached, it seemed as if he overwhelmed his hearers with compunction for their sins, and

broke through the obstinacy of the most hardened. Once, at Aquila, he had been preaching against vanity, the danger of worldly amusements, and the sins commonly indulged in with regard to dress, and at its close the ladies brought their lace and perfumes, their artificial hair, cards, dice, and other such things, and made them into a huge bonfire. This happened also after sermons at Nuremberg, Leipsic, Frankfort, and other places.

After preaching on death and the last judgment, at Bohemia, one hundred and twenty young men from among his hearers were moved to give themselves to the more perfect service of God in different religious Orders, sixty of whom made choice of the one to which S. John himself belonged.

The Saint was employed in several important commissions by His Holiness the Pope, one of which was the preaching in Italy against the heresy of some of the remaining Fratricelli, whom he succeeded in exterminating. Being made Apostolic Legate, he travelled through

Tyrol, Bavaria, and Austria, with one companion, preaching continually, and with the same success as in other places ; but his sermons were given in Latin, and explained by an interpreter to those who did not understand.

In the year 1453, Mahomet II. took Constantinople, and Nicholas V. sent S. John to preach a crusade to all Christian princes ; for, believing in the power to conquer the Western Empire, the enemy had brought his victorious army to Hungary, and encamped before Belgrade. Forty thousand had responded to S. John's call to arm themselves against the infidel Turks, while the Saint himself accompanied them through all dangers, holding in his hands the cross he had received from the Pope, and cheering them with his own courage. But when the enemy got into the town which stands where the Danube and the Save meet, the Christians gave way, and all would have been lost had not S. John appeared, crying, " Victory, Jesus, victory !" and this animated

the soldiers with fresh hope, and rushing forward they hurled the infidels from the ramparts and drove them out of the town.

Next year Hunniades, the chief commander of the crusade, was taken ill of fever contracted during the fatigues of the campaign, and died at Zemplin. When his end drew nigh he insisted on rising and going to the church to receive Viaticum, for he said it was not fitting that the King of kings should come to him. Having attended the brave man during his last illness, S. John Capistran preached his funeral oration, but very soon after was himself cast upon a bed of sickness which he never left again. As he lay dying in his convent of Wilbech or Vilatz, King Ladislaus and many noblemen came at different times to visit him, being greatly edified by the patient sweetness with which he endured his pain, and his perfect resignation to live or die, according as God should appoint.

He continually declared that he was treated far more leniently than his sins deserved, and

never ceased praising and blessing God for His infinite goodness. At length, having received the last rites of the Church, the Saint departed from earth to his rest, having been laid upon the floor, by his most earnest desire, there to breathe his last. This happened on the 23rd October, 1456, when he was seventy-one years old.

The town of Wilbech afterwards fell into the hands of the Turks, and the Franciscan friars removed S. John's body to another town, but the Lutherans seized it and flung it into the Danube. The relics were, however, rescued and preserved with reverence at Illoe.

S. John Capistran was canonised by Pope Alexander VIII. in the year 1690.



S. Louis Bertrand.

A.D. 1581.

LOUIS was the eldest of nine children born to John Louis Bertrand of Valencia ; all of whom began to follow in the footsteps of their pious parents, who watched over and instructed them with anxious care.

Louis more particularly loved to retire from the rest, that he might pray to God, and even in childhood he possessed a spirit of mortification in food and recreation, and delighted to practise penance. When he was old enough to begin his school education he kept strict guard over himself, lest he should wander

from God, striving always to realise the Divine presence wherever he might be.

At fifteen years old Louis wished to receive the habit of the Dominican Order, but his father objected on the ground of his youth, and his delicate constitution. But though his religious life was thus delayed, the holy youth became more anxious for it, and when he was received as a novice he showed a strong and generous spirit, which greatly edified the brethren. After S. Louis had been ordained priest he used to prepare himself to offer the Holy Sacrifice by several hours' prayer, and very frequently by confession also, that he might cleanse his soul from all stain.

In 1551 he was made Master of Novices, and led his charges to conceive a great distrust of self and a strong confidence in God, and to unite themselves closely to Our Lord by a prayerful spirit.

In 1557 a pestilential disorder broke out, and raged violently in Valencia, but S. Louis had no fear for his own life, and assisted the

sick and dying to the utmost of his ability. When it was over he begged leave to be the companion of one of the friars who was going on a mission to America, and embarked at Seville in the year 1562. Arriving in the South he repaired to the convent of his Order, and without taking any rest after his journey began to prepare himself by fasts and vigils for the opening of his mission. Great was the success which marked his labours, and God permitted him to work many miracles, that so multitudes might be converted to Him by witnessing His power in His Saints. During the space of three years, S. Louis led above ten thousand souls to repentance.

His next mission was to the Caribbees, and penetrating the forests of Guiana, he won many of these barbarians to God, administering Holy Baptism to them. During this time he had difficulties to encounter and to overcome ; his life was attempted both by poison and the sword, but God preserved His servant in all dangers which beset his path. Being recalled

to Spain by his superiors, the Saint reached Seville in 1569, and was appointed prior of two convents of his Order. S. Teresa applied to S. Louis Bertrand for counsel in some of her great difficulties, and wrote to him concerning her design of reforming the Order of Mount Carmel. In replying to her on this subject, he said :

“Because the honour of God is highly concerned in your intended undertaking, I took some time to recommend it to Him in my poor prayers. For this reason I deferred so long my answer. I now bid you take courage in the Name of the Lord, Who will favour you. It is in His Name that I assure you your reformation will be within the space of fifty years one of the most illustrious Orders of the Church.”

Although in the beginning of his life the Saint had not displayed any marked ability for preaching, he overcame natural difficulty so completely, that his sermons always brought forth much fruit in the souls of those who heard

him; but he was accustomed to say that men must not judge of their success by the applause they might receive, but by the tears of contrition shed, and the reformed life of those who had been dead in sin.

During the two last years which the Saint spent on earth he suffered constant and painful illness; but he would exclaim with S. Augustine: "Here, cut! here, burn! here, spare not! that I may have mercy for all eternity."

But though thus tried, he did not discontinue the work of an Apostle, and in 1580 preached the Lent at Xativa. From there he passed on to give a course of sermons in the cathedral of Valencia, but was carried from the pulpit to the bed from which he never rose again. He seemed very cheerful at the thought of his approaching end, and almost twelvemonths before he had revealed the day of his departure to several friends, enjoining them, however, not to speak of it. Surrounded by all the brethren of the con-

vent, this holy man breathed his last on the 9th October, 1581, having then reached the age of fifty-five years.

So many miraculous cures were wrought at his tomb and through his intercession, that he was beatified by Paul V. in 1608, and canonised by Clement X. in 1671.



S. Francis Paula.

A.D. 1508.



FN Paula, a small town of Calabria, this Saint was born in the year 1416. While yet a child—the child of poor but virtuous parents—it seemed evident that God had some special purpose in his regard, and when he had passed the age of twelve years his father sent him to the Franciscan friars at S. Marco, who taught him to read. For one year he remained there, during which time he made a pilgrimage to Assisi and to Rome; and when he returned to his native town he found for himself a solitary cave among the rocks on the sea-coast.

Though not fifteen years of age he had no desire for the pleasures or advantages the world can offer ; and in his retirement he was happy and content, passing his time in prayer and contemplation, and sleeping on the hard rock, and eating the herbs which he found in the neighbouring wood. When he was about twenty years old two others joined him, and having built a small chapel and three cells, they asked a priest from the town to come and say Mass for them.

After the lapse of seventeen years so many had entered upon the same life of holy retirement, that a large monastery and church was erected, and from far and near people assisted in the work, so that even noblemen carried burdens and laboured with their own hands.

Though Francis no longer had a rock for his bed, he chose a board to lie on, and a rough log for his pillow, until in his extreme age he was induced to use a mat. Only one meal did he allow himself during the day, and in Lent he obliged his monks to abstain entirely from

food made with milk, eggs, cheese or butter. Many as were his virtues, the chief seems to have been humility, yet though he loved to be hidden from men he could converse with the great and noble without losing his recollection.

So earnestly did he desire to impress on his brethren the love of abjection that he called them "Minims," signifying that they were as the very least in the service of Almighty God ; and he begged them ever to remember that humility was the foundation of all Christian virtue.

In 1474 the Order was confirmed by Pope Sixtus IV., and Francis was appointed Superior-general, and some two years later two other houses were founded.

In 1479 the Saint was induced to visit Sicily, for the purpose of establishing other monasteries, and there he remained for twelve months, winning many to Christ by his holy life and the miracles he performed by the power of God. But trials have ever been the special portion of the children of God, and the

King of Naples, being provoked at some good counsel S. Francis had offered him, caused him to be taken prisoner on the charge of having built religious houses without the royal permission. The officer who was charged with the Saint's apprehension was so touched by his humility that he went back to Ferdinand and besought him not to persecute one so beloved of God.

Pope Paul II. sent one of his chamberlains to visit Francis, and prove whether he was indeed moved by the Spirit of God. Arrived at the monastery, the messenger would have kissed his hands, but Francis, falling on his knees, declared that it was for him to kiss the hands of one who for thirty years had offered the Holy Sacrifice. The chamberlain was astonished that Francis should thus know how long he had been a priest; but he asked to speak with him privately in his cell, and there began to censure his rule as too austere, and exhort him to beware of walking in the extraordinary ways of spiritual life.

The Saint replied with great humility ; but turning to the fire, placed burning coals upon his palm, saying : “ All creatures obey those who serve God with a perfect heart.” When the visitor saw that his hands were unhurt, he went back to the Pope to assure him that Francis was a Saint.

At this time Louis XI. was King of France, and when his wicked life drew near its close, great fear came upon him, and he sent to Calabria, begging that Francis of Paula would hasten to him, promising that if he did so, he would do great things for his Order.

Francis answered that he could not undertake such a journey when he was asked from such motives, and it was only at the bidding of the Pope that he at length set forth.

As the Saint passed through Provence he healed many of the plague-stricken ; and when he reached Plessis, the King met him, and on his knees entreated his prayers for a prolonged life.

“God’s decree is unchangeable ; therefore resign thyself to His holy Will,” was the reply ; but the King was not satisfied, and sent Francis a statue of the Blessed Mother of God, wrought in pure gold.

Francis refused the gift. “I do not love the gold,” he said, “but her who is represented, and I have my own paper representation of her, with which I am well content.”

The Saint remained with Louis till his death, striving to awaken him to a true contrition, and he became the most valued friend and counsellor of King Charles VIII., who erected several monasteries for him.

The three last months of his life were spent by the holy Francis within his cell, in special preparation for death. On Palm Sunday, 1506, he became ill with fever, and on Maundy Thursday he gathered his brethren together, and after exhorting them to a faithful observance of their rule, he made his confession and received Communion with a cord about his neck ; but it was God’s Will that his life should

be prolonged in weakness until the 2nd April, 1508, when he expired at the age of ninety-one years. A story is told of him, that once when a blacksmith had shod his ass he had not money to pay, whereat the man began to revile him. Then at the bidding of S. Francis the ass cast off her shoes, and went on her way. It is for this that Francis of Paula is sometimes represented with an ass by the side of a forge; occasionally he appears in art with *Caritas* on his breast, in rays of light, and standing on his cloak; for an old legend tells that once, having not the means of paying his fare by boat, the waves floated him from Sicily to Calabria, standing only on his cloak. Some relics of the Saint are preserved in churches of his Order at Plessis, Paris, Naples, and other places. In 1592 the Huguenots broke open the shrine which contained his entire body, and having dragged it about the streets, burned it with a fire kindled by the wood of a crucifix, so that only a few bones were recovered for the veneration of the faithful.



S. Cajetan.

A.D. 1547.

FROM his infancy, Cajetan, the son of Gaspar of Thiena, was called "The Saint," for even then he seemed free from the ordinary passions natural to mankind, and was of a marvellously sweet temper. His mother had placed her little son under the special patronage of the Blessed Virgin, and Cajetan grew up with a tender love for the Mother of God, and a great devotion to the Passion of Christ. He was also accustomed to set Our Blessed Lord before him as a constant example in his own daily life, and thus learned to be meek, pure, humble, and

filled with charity towards all men. While giving much of his time to study, Cajetan found opportunity for daily prayer and devotion ; and as he grew older he resolved to become a priest, and built a parochial chapel at Rampazzo, which those might frequent who were some distance from the parish church. At twenty-eight years of age he went to Rome, and was made protonotary by Julius II., on account of his high rank. There was at that time in Rome a confraternity called " Of the Love of God," which Cajetan joined, for his whole heart sympathised with the object—the promotion of the Divine glory by the labours of those zealous men and women who were enrolled in it.

It was not then the custom to communicate more than four or five times in the year ; but S. Cajetan urged that the soul stood in need of more frequent nourishment, and by his entreaty and example many pious persons became monthly communicants, while some even received the Holy Eucharist weekly.

When about to offer up the Holy Sacrifice, the Saint could scarcely conceal his transports of love, and on one occasion it seemed to him that the Virgin Mother placed in his arms her Divine Son.

Being compelled by the death of his mother to return to Vicenza, he there joined a confraternity somewhat resembling that "Of the Love of God;" and his earnestness and zeal acted as a stimulus to many other souls, and so much did the confraternity increase, that its members were able to undertake the charge of a hospital of incurables.

In the very midst of all this work for God, the confessor of S. Cajetan commanded him to leave Vicenza and go to Venice, giving no reason for so doing but his own will, though his motive in thus acting was to secure a wider sphere of usefulness to his holy penitent. Without remonstrance or delay Cajetan left his native place, and soon became as valuable at Venice as Father Creno had expected; but when he had been there awhile, this wise di-

rector ordered him to Rome. The state of the Church in those days filled the heart of Cajetan with deep sorrow, and in order to reform the clergy he—in concert with other holy ecclesiastics—instituted an Order of regular clergy, who should take for a model the lives of the Apostles.

This Order was approved by Pope Clement VII. in 1524, and Caralfa, the Archbishop of Theate (now called Chieti), was chosen as first general, and thus the priests were called by the name of Theatins. Their principal work was the preaching of the Gospel, the opposition of error, the help of the sick, and the effort to bring people to a more frequent reception of the Sacraments. At first they dwelt in a house in Rome, but their number increased so rapidly that they had to take a larger house on Monte Pincio.

Great suffering fell on the new Order at the time when the Constable Bourbon led an army against Rome, committing there the most horrible outrages. The Lutherans and other

enemies of the Church composed this army, and were guilty of greater cruelties than even Goths or Vandals had been known to perpetrate. The Pope and Cardinals were forced to retreat to the Castle of S. Angelo, and the house of the Theatins was almost destroyed, for these robbers had supposed that Cajetan had great treasures there; and when they were not found, he was scourged and tortured, in the hope of making him reveal where this wealth was concealed. He bore this cruel treatment without a murmur; but when the soldiers retired he made his escape with his companions and took refuge in Venice, where a house and church were given them. The Bishop of Theate having fulfilled the term of his superiority, Cajetan was elected in his place for three years.

Being sent to found a house of the Order at Naples, the Count of Oppido wished to endow it with lands, but Cajetan refused.

“What security have you, good Father, that you will be able to obtain daily sustenance?” asked the Count.

"But what security have you, my lord?" replied Cajetan.

"Oh, as for me, I trust that my farmers will pay their rent."

"But if the crops fail they will not be able to pay it."

"We must trust God to give us the seasons," said the Count; whereat Cajetan smiled and exclaimed, "So, so. It comes to trust in God as the root of all security."

Still the Count hesitated, reminding Cajetan that though Venice was a large and wealthy city, Naples was poor; but the Saint had an answer ready for him. "The God of Venice is the God also of Naples," he said.

The zeal of Cajetan for souls was such that he was called in Naples "The soul-hunter." This zeal, this intense desire to bring men to know the love of God, made his sorrow at the sight of sin most keen, and especially did he grieve over the laxity of the clergy.

One day, as he thought of these scandals, he had a vision of Christ bowed beneath the

weight of His Cross, with tears and blood disfiguring His face, and as he gazed, he saw that Divine Master beckon him to approach, and He then laid the edge of the Cross on the shoulder of His servant. Cajetan felt as if its weight crushed him, and he understood how the evil in the Church was falling heavily and painfully upon the Saviour, as one more of His many sufferings.

Being worn out with trials, labour, and austerities, Cajetan knew that his end was approaching; but he could not be persuaded to lie upon a bed during his last sickness. "My Saviour died on a cross, suffer me at least to die upon ashes," he said; his will was granted him, and lying on sackcloth strewn with ashes, he received the last Sacraments of the Church, and expired on the 7th August, 1547. His remains were laid in the church of S. Paul at Naples, and are there to the present day.



S. Paschal Baylon.

A.D. 1592. •

ONE of the many Saints whom God has chosen from among the poor and lowly of this world, was Paschal Baylon, whose parents were but labourers dwelling in a small town of Arragon.

They could not even afford to send their little boy to school, but he would carry a book under his arm when he went out into the fields and beg those who passed by to tell him the names of some of the letters, and thus he gradually learned to read while still a young child. Yet Paschal had no love for books of amusement; he was naturally of a grave dis-

position, and the stories of God's Saints, or the life of Christ among men, was all that possessed any interest for him.

When old enough, he became a shepherd, and the simple life was one which had a great charm for him; he loved to look upon the beauties of Nature, seeing in them the work of God Almighty, besides, while keeping his sheep he could occupy himself with a spiritual book.

The master who employed Paschal became so much attached to him, that he offered to adopt him as a son, to succeed to all his worldly possessions; but the youth declined this offer, believing that his poverty was the Will of God, and a state more resembling that which Christ chose for Himself on earth. While his flocks browsed upon the hills, Paschal might be seen wrapt in prayer, and it became evident to all men that he was one of the chosen servants of God. There were many troubles in his life: some of those who were similarly engaged were apt to fight

and quarrel, and speak evil words, nor did his gentle remonstrances suffice to check them, so at length he resolved to separate himself from them.

He now began to pray most earnestly to God for direction in the choice of a state of life, and was not long before he felt drawn to aspire to the holy habit of religion. So at twenty years of age Paschal left his home and friends, journeying to Valencia, where there was a Franciscan monastery which followed the reformed rule. For some time he obtained employment again as a shepherd, but in 1540 was admitted to the monastery as a lay-brother. The rule was severe, but Paschal added to it many private austerities, yet without any attachment to his will, for he readily yielded to any command to abstain from his accustomed practices. It is told, that when he had to change monasteries, he never spoke of one house as being more agreeable to him than another, and the meaner his employment, so much the more was he content.

When the general of the Order was at Paris, Paschal was sent there on business. Many cities were at that time in the hands of the Huguenots, and they would pursue the Saint with sticks and stones, while on two occasions he was taken as a spy, yet his journey was safely accomplished at last, though he had received a wound in the shoulder, the effects of which lasted his life.

S. Paschal had a marked devotion for the Blessed Sacrament, and towards the close of his days he would spend long hours in contemplation prostrate before the altar, and was often favoured by raptures and ecstasies. At the age of fifty-two years he died, and during the three days in which his remains were exposed to the veneration of the faithful, many miracles were attested by which God was pleased to make known the sanctity of His servant. By Pope Alexander VIII. Paschal was canonised in the year 1690.



S. Felix of Cantalice.

A.D. 1587.

ONE of those servants of God who from infancy maintained singular holiness of life, was Felix of Cantalice, so holy that the little companions of his humble child-life were wont to call him—not in ridicule, but in love—"Felix the little Saint."

His parents were poor and hard-working people of Cantalice, at the foot of the Apennines; and when the boy was of sufficient age, he was set to keep sheep.

When in the heat of noontide he felt weary, he would retire under the shadow of a great

oak, on the bark of which he had cut a rude cross, and there he would pray to God and the Virgin Mother whom he loved so truly.

As time went on and Felix grew stronger, he was placed at the plough, and in that employment remained as quiet, innocent, and peaceable as in his earlier days, so that it was impossible for any to quarrel with him. True, there were those who might try to vex or ill-treat him, but Felix would only say: "May God make thee a Saint," and thus frequently turned away their anger, and awakened them to some sense of shame.

It was in his youth that, reading of the lives of some of the Egyptian hermits, a great desire filled the mind of Felix to become a recluse. After a while, when he had thought and prayed upon the subject, he believed that perhaps it would be better for him to enter a religious house, but he did not act upon this resolution for some length of time.

At length, he was one day driving two bullocks in the plough, when something

startled them, and dashing forward they trampled on Felix, and even drew the plough over him, yet he was quite uninjured. That accident made him determine to delay no longer giving his whole life to God; and going to the nearest Capuchin monastery, he begged to be admitted among the lay-brothers.

Taking his hand, the Superior led him before the crucifix. "Look how Christ suffered for thee," he said. "Hast thou courage to follow in His footsteps?"

With starting tears, Felix declared that he did indeed desire to take up the Cross of Christ and carry it to his life's end, whereupon the Superior gave him a letter to the provincial at Rome.

Felix passed through his novitiate at Anticola, but was sent to Rome four years later, where he remained during the rest of his life, employed chiefly in begging money and food for the monastery. "Deo gratias," was his response when alms were given him, and it became his most constant utterance upon other

occasions. Once coming close to two gentlemen fighting a duel, he rushed between them, crying, "Deo gratias! my brethren, I beseech you to say Deo gratias;" and at length each repeated the words, the quarrel ended, and they became friends. Felix loved the blue sky, and the green grass, and the springing flowers; the beauty of nature turned his heart to the great God of nature, the Creator of all that is beautiful, and raising his eyes to heaven he would exclaim, "Deo gratias."

The same words fell from his lips when he saw the merry children at their play, so that the little ones always called him "Brother Deo gratias."

Returning from his begging expeditions, Felix must have been weary, but he found his rest before the Blessed Sacrament, where, with outstretched arms, he would pray long hours for himself, his brethren, and all who were poor, or sad or sinful.

The other friars wore sandals, but Felix went barefoot. "It is easier for my feet," he

would say, for in his humility he desired that none might guess he had chosen this as a slight way of mortifying his body.

So, beloved of God and man, Felix passed through life calmly and peacefully, without those strong temptations and trials which come as necessary purifications to those whose earlier days have been less stainless. At length he grew feeble from old age, and was confined to his bed, yet, unless closely watched, he would crawl into the church and lie before the altar, where he would often be found in a swoon. Some interior conflict, some suggestion of the evil one, would seem to have been permitted to assail Felix in his agony, for he rose partly in his bed and cried: "No—I cannot despair. It is my Saviour Who will judge, and His mercy will I not doubt;" and with these words he laid himself down and died.

The body of S. Felix of Cantalice is in the church of the Capuchins, at Rome. It is told that once he gave S. Philip Neri water to

drink from a bottle which he was carrying through the streets ; and this scene is often represented in art. At other times, S. Felix may be known by carrying a sack over his shoulder, and written on it are his own favourite words, "Deo gratias."

THE END.

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